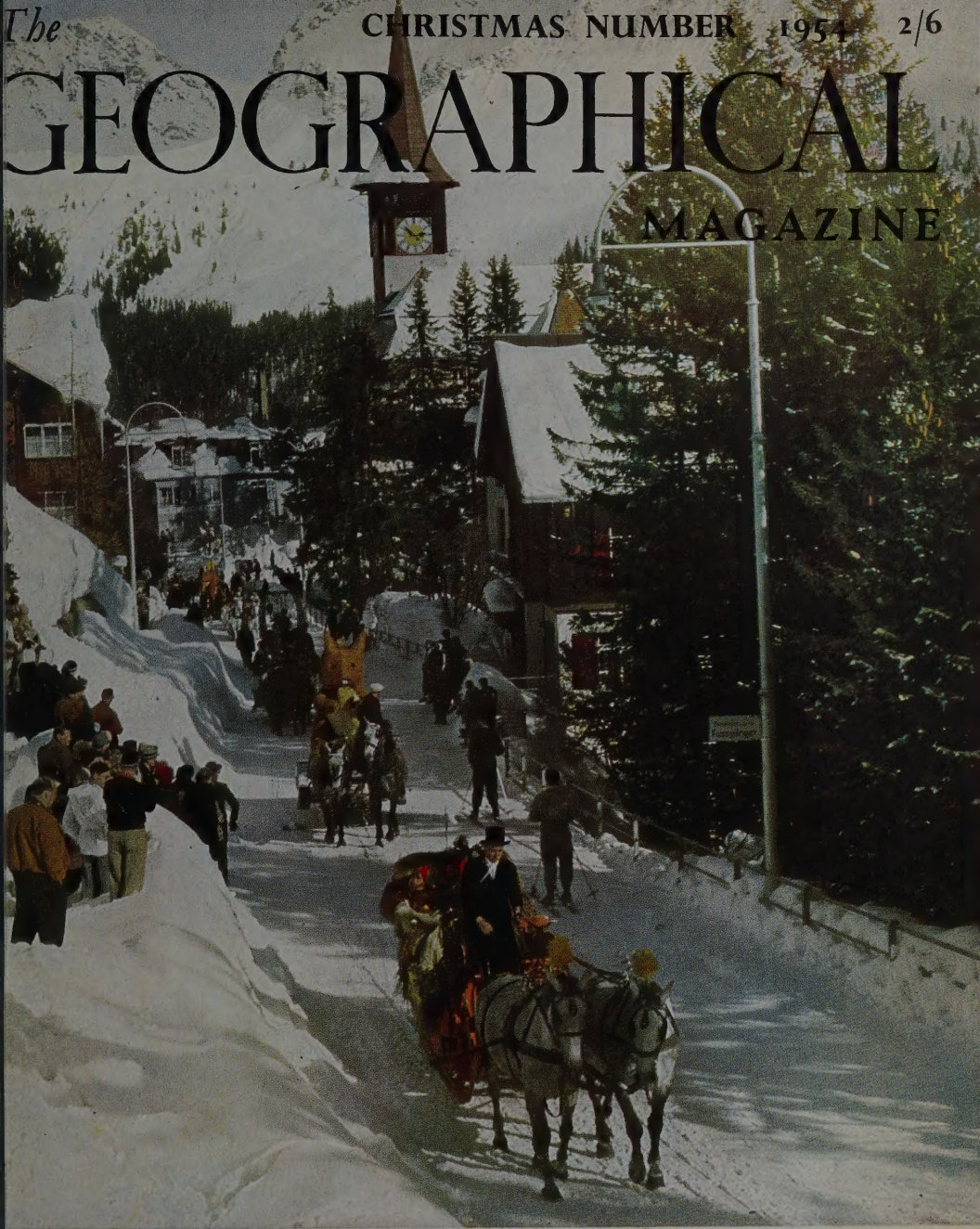


The CHRISTMAS NUMBER 1954 2/6

# GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE



96  
ages  
plates

## CHRISTMAS GEOGRAPHY:

Bethlehem—Falkland Islands—Sarawak—Spain

WILLIAM SANSON SIR HARRY LUKE JOHN SEYMOUR



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# The Sixth Hour

By WILLIAM SANSOM

*In our dark midwinter days it is difficult to think of the sun as an enemy; but in many places and at certain times he is. One place and time are concentrated in the word siesta: a word whose full meaning can only be understood in relation to the life of Spain and to the sixth hour when the sun becomes a "brazen monster", as the author of South and A Touch of the Sun here shows*

ONE of the few more sensible commercial appeals is that of the bedseller who tells us that we spend a third of our lives in bed, so why not make it comfortable?

Beds and proportion: with these two ideas in head it occurs—how little do we North-erners consider that sensibly restful period in the lives of a third of our fellow-men on earth, the recession at the sixth hour, the siesta!

From our rainbraced cafeteria point of vantage, as we snaffle our veal-loaf and hurry back to something called Two-Sharp, the panic hour unpanicked and its lovely lunch-long lethargy is too easily dismissed as simple sloth. When we talk of those sunnier countries, much is said of *energies* parallel to our own, of the cuning of elephants, or of how the girls of one land carry pots on their heads and of another bear their burden pannierwise across the hips—and how interesting to note that this difference moulds the fine columnar walk of the southern Spaniard as opposed to the engaging hip-waggle of the Lombardy girls—how *interesting* all this is . . . but what of the question's reverse, of the passive habit, of that great hot chunk cut out of the day's midriff, their siesta? Dogsleep, it is let to lie unsung.

There is a moment on the Orient Express run, somewhere in the Balkans, when people begin to shake their heads when they mean "yes" and nod for their "no": unseating to the traveller, but properly indigenous. And on crossing the Pyrenean barrier and descending into Spain, one finds the host or shopkeeper at his doorway pushing away the invited with both hands to indicate welcome. These are very simple instances of how arbitrary differences of habit may be; how much more powerful, then, the difference ordered by a force of climate, the heavy hour of the sun's meridian when even the black goat seeks the friendly olive's shade, when whole towns slumber, when shops open at four, and life is seen at best by the soft light of Venetian bars gently striping the pillow, or at worst in the cool shadow of a railway arch—but even then not at so much the worst, for the hour

is so intense that shade and coolness are not only the real prerequisites but also a wholly consuming idea. The traveller from non-siesta climates is easily deceived; since sunlight looks simply like sunlight, he risks his hot head throughout the afternoon. He would never risk a northern winter's walk without the saving measure of wool.

*Siesta* is a Spanish word. It derives from the Latin *sextus*, the sixth hour after dawn, noon. From the oil-derricks of Venezuela to the seraglio calm of the Sublime Porte, from the camel's odorous shade to the corrugated cabins of the Ivory Coast, men sleep. But since the Spaniards made a word of it, and a sacrament of the institution, we may in gratitude and for the moment study the matter through their eyes, narrowing down a field as widely scattered as the sun is high.

From noon on, then, everything—earth, air and all still water—gets hotter, retains the first heat, takes in more. Heat blinds down like a pressing weight, the air solidifies, sharp light throbs in the brain. Everything that can stop, stops. Trams go on, but shutters go up. The shops will not open again till four o'clock. Blinds are not drawn because they have already been drawn since nine: everything is dedicated to shade and coolness—the reason, too, why so much immaculate white is washed on the outer walls of houses, not for cleanliness but to reflect back the sun's rays (why, too, pale ducks and dresses are worn in the heat, only the dark peasant remaining necessarily a martyr to mourning or dirt).

Such measures are not luxurious, they are common sense. Siesta and sloth are quite divisible. The shops that close from one till four stay open till seven and eight. The last cinema showing begins at eleven. At two o'clock in the morning, metropolitan streets are well alive. The afternoon sleep is well indemnified. Offices begin earlier, close later. The burden of early rising never falls so hardly on subtropical shoulders—for that fresh shaded time of day before the



11 photographs by David Moore

### *Early morning*

monstrous sun takes over is a cool basin of affirmative pleasure. The town, the village is bustling at seven and eight: in the town the trams are full, the shoe-polishers well at work; and in a village by the sea the night-fisherman will be riding along on his bicycle, blowing his anachronistic conch to greet with a basket of squid the dawn-loving housewife already garrulous in the cool morning air. At the other end of the day—the ubiquitous *paseo*: witness every town and village on the peninsula, the land's entire population, strolling the evening air an hour after sun-

down. An aerial biologist looking down would think this a teeming of some instinctual drive round the queen-ant: but no, nothing more than a release from the sun, enjoyment of the cool evening air in human concourse. Like the siesta, it is the diastole to the sun's hot systole. One would imagine that, in a country of such consistent weather, sun and heat would be taken for granted. They are, by these daily escapades of *paseo* and *siesta*. But at the same time no day goes by but with: "God, what heat!" Or: "How fresh it is!" And water is never ordered, only



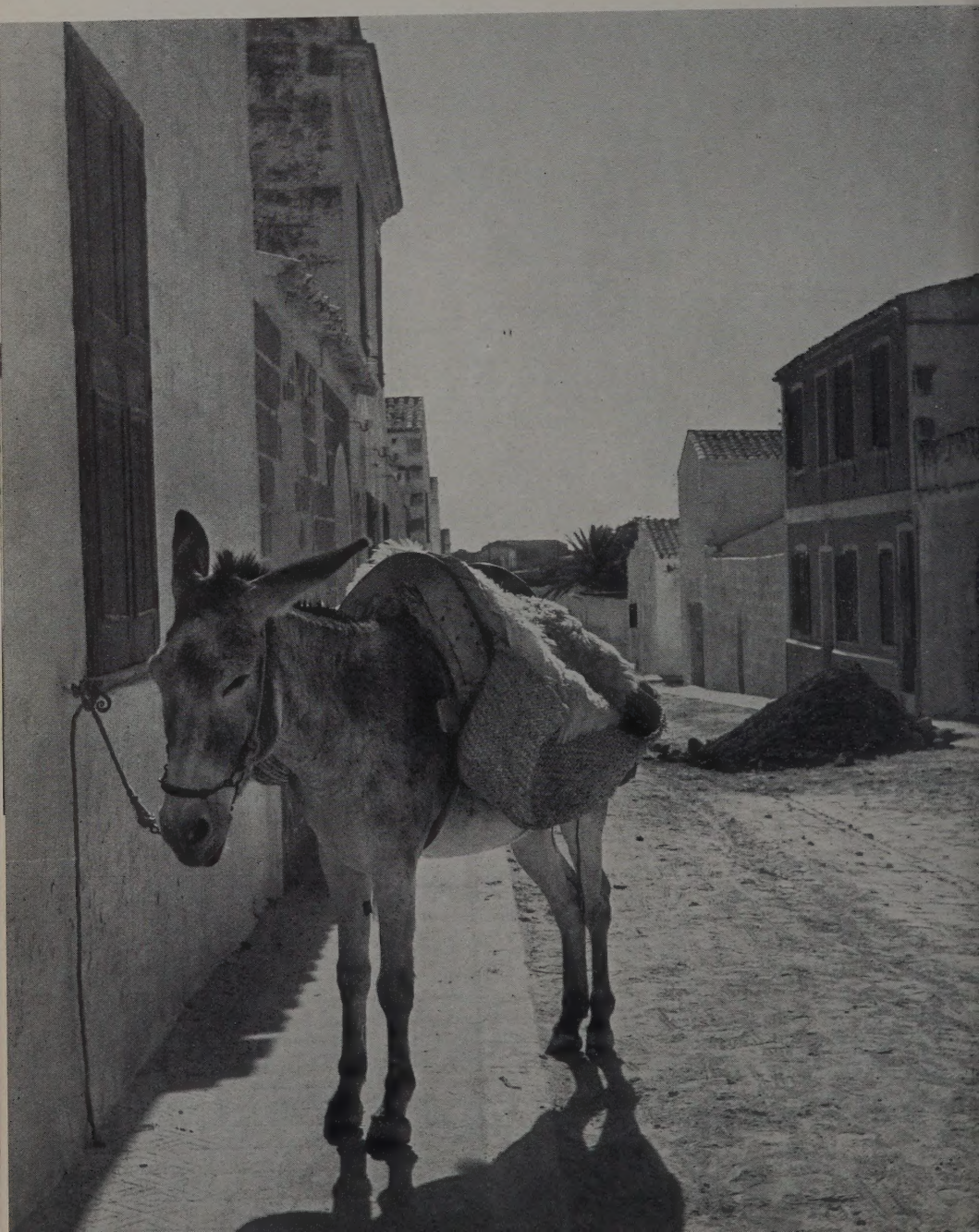
### *The Sixth Hour*

*agua fresca*—cold water; and it is fresh this and fresh that all day long, fresh that means cool, fresh, fresh, fresh against the stale hot breath of the sun.

Siesta and sloth are divisible: but siesta and snobbery? The Spaniard is a snob about the amount of shade and rest he takes. To win the battle against the sun is the day's most precious achievement. To take a longer siesta than others is a true sign of superiority. Women are vain of their white skins, men of their cool appearance. To the true siesta hour may be added a dozen lesser escapes

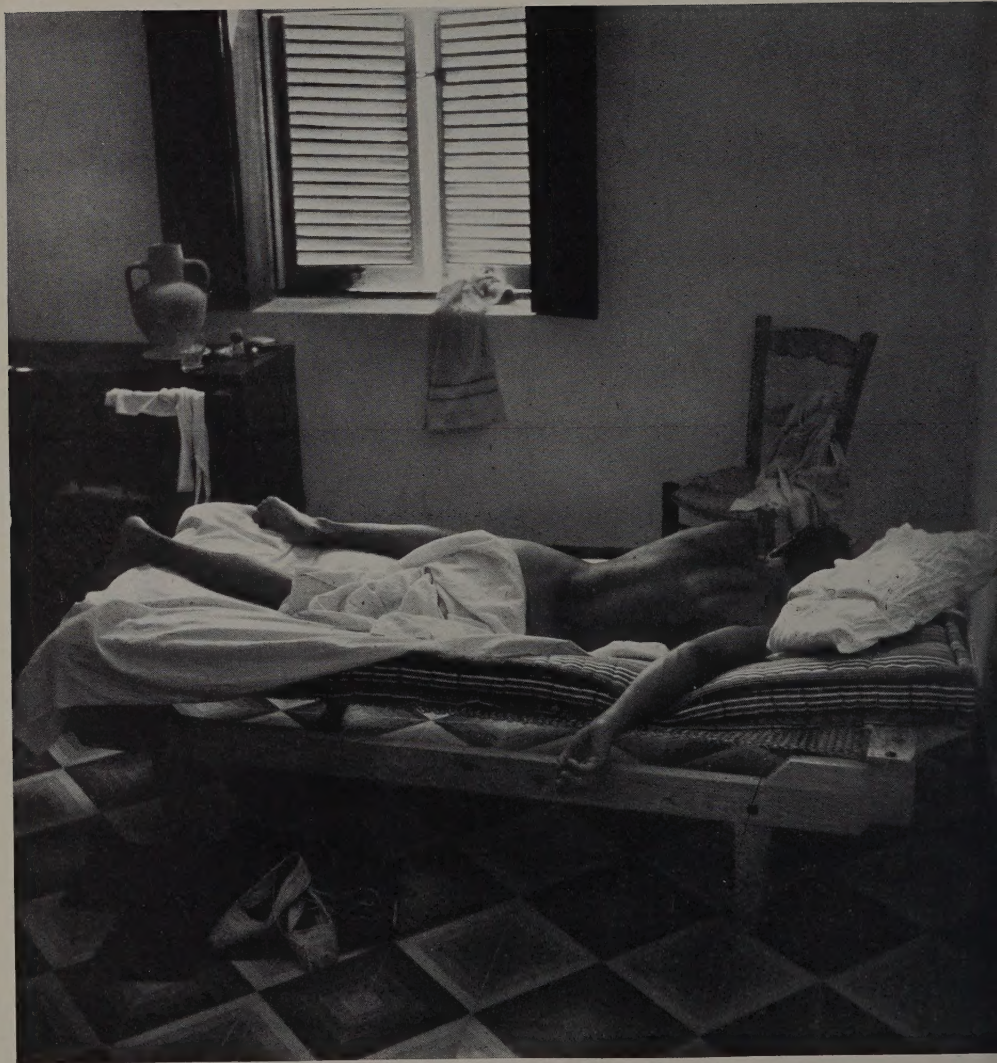
throughout the day. A cruel self-congratulation drapes the habit of sitting with an iced drink in the dark calm of a café awning when builders' labourers, their skins white only with dust, are taking the sun opposite. As the distant sound of mowing or hammering improves the cedarn English summer's afternoon, so this sight befits the sanguine Spanish mind. In the bull-ring the massive audience packed in its round tiered hive seems always to be on the move, there is a movement like the flashing of the wings of a thousand crawling bees: the ladies fanning

*No burden heavier than the eyelid*





*Darkness and cool stone*



*The world forgetting . . .*

*Submission*



themselves. Seats for the fight are sold in terms of sun and shade. This division is so important that the ticket offices dotted about the town are called *Sol y Sombra*, not *Toros* or whatever other excitant word might be thought more apposite. The President sits in the shade, and the *torero* prefers to fight there. When at Thermopylae the Spartan Dieneces was told that the very sun would be darkened by the fearful multitude of the barbarians' arrows, his reply was: "Good, we shall fight in the shade." To us in the North the sun may be a longlorn friend, but he is the enemy of the Southerner. Once, having summered in Italy, and having slept unmolested on the steps of many an Italian church, I arrived in Paris on a hot day and tried the same at St Germain-des-Prés. I was arrested. There lies the difference. But in the South—what arcades, what awnings, what canopies and colonnades! The cry for shade is evident everywhere. In many Spanish towns horizontal canvases are stretched like shady sails from housetop to housetop throughout the length of whole streets. In such obsessive circumstances the siesta, when the brazen monster is baying his strongest, is a sacrament.

Now everything is dead. Pale brown dogs lie like a death of bones in the cactus shade. A horse lies sprawled like a huge hare. The trees and the grasses, wood-engraved, seem to pause under a great silencing weight from above—even the vegetable, hungriest of lives, knows a waiting suspense. It is the Panic hour, when the goats take on a knowing human look—and what Greek maiden would not have been startled by the two cunning eyes of old bearded biglip cutting at her from the ilex shade, what myths might not have been begun?—the hour of heavy windless light and wide suspense when ancient shepherds felt the imminence of Nature taking Form and Henry James brought out his sunny ghosts to play, a time allied to terror; when every black-cut shadow cloaks an unseen standing figure, when each moveless bush holds the breath of its leaves for what might burst through and awfully stand revealed. Only the carapaced, inward insect perforates the silence—the cicada sounds its resonant chapels, and giant bees extend their tongues to lick the sleeping honey: the mantis, falsely, stands as stiff as all siesta. A fool cock may crow, a single note of strutting nerves—but that is all. The rest is silence, heavy, hot and huge.

And on the bed? What cool quiet shade in the watered light of jealousy and curtain, of

rattan Spanish blind and striped Venetian shutter! There is such burning power outside that each infusion holds a luminescence of its own, as though phosphorus was laid there, original light powdered on the shutters and diffused in green reflection round the room. No sleep at first, the pillow white and cool, the one light-weary fly exhausting the circuit of the walls to drop and buzz itself to death on the tiled floor; and as relaxation takes its course, sheets kicked away and body naked for the shadow's cooling touch, cool as the tiled floor—then what calligraphies astound the walls! What memories come back—for this is the nearest we will ever get to those longlost hours of childhood's afternoon rest, even to earlier silk-fringed moments in the pram. A prismic jewel stabs the wall by the wardrobe, the shape and size exactly of a rainbow medal-ribbon. The window-covering traces its soft grey pattern on the ceiling, a ribbing of shutters, a tracery of lace, the ghost-grey tasselling of a pelmet huge as a nursery dream. And all this, quietly, with a silent vegetable stealth, is moving slowly, slowly round. The room is never still. New shadows wink and play about the chairs, and in the furthest corners. A white jug softly comes to life, stays, withdraws itself. Sometimes, if there is a street outside, the open window-glass and shutter-frame will play a strange projection on the wall—the passing car, and cart, and passer-by will all appear, upside down in silhouette and moving in a soundless swimming way, to show the dreamlife of a world somewhere out and far away continuing. And it is better so. If the room were too precisely still, rest would never seem so precious. It is good to know that elsewhere there is rest—the old lady in the *comestibles* nodding cool in her rocking-chair, the labourer slumped like a lord in carob-shade, the town-clerk sweating off his rice and wine, coat off and feet up, secure till four o'clock; but it is good also to know that *something* goes on, a tram or an insect, to rarify this moment stolen from between two childhoods, the first in the canopied pram, the second allowed only after sixty years of afternoon effort. All afternoons, in the North as well, should surely know the grace of Forty Winks: the financier with his black eyeband knows the value of the couch's half-hour, the Sunday joint is a right-of-way to the armchair by the fire. But for all our working years this necessary relaxation is, for most of us pallid progressive Northerners, unhappily denied.

# As Others See Us

by C. A. BURLAND

THERE WAS a time when all men regarded others as equals of sorts: an equality which came from everyone thinking his own civilization better than everyone else's. So we may imagine the Pharaohs receiving visitors from Crete, or the Chinese emperors ambassadors from Rome, or the rajahs of South India merchants from China. If to the dwellers in one region all foreigners seemed 'barbarians', the compliment was returned by the dwellers in another. Thus the Romans might depict their generals' humbled captives on a triumphal arch; but so also did the Persian King of Kings show the captured Roman Emperor kneeling to him for mercy.

It was the European, the white man, who changed this balance of esteem or disesteem; and he did so violently, in quite a short time, bursting forth across the oceans of the world and surprising the peoples of other continents and other colours by his appearance. His own continent had been assailed and nearly conquered by militant Islam; half the Mediterranean, his private sea, remained in Moslem hands; his attempts to reconquer the Holy Land, the birthplace of his religion, had finally failed. The expansion of Europe by sea was his half-conscious revenge.

Prince Henry the Navigator's successors outflanked the infidels blocking the way to the Indies by circumnavigation of Africa, so that the Portuguese ships little by little crept along the African coast into the Indian Ocean and made themselves its masters. Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain tried a greater bid to the westward and backed Columbus in his accidental discovery of a new continent washed by a new ocean. In the century between 1450 and 1550 the greater part of the world was suddenly revealed to the European, and became involved in European politics and commercial undertakings.

It is really quite incredible what the white man accomplished with his comparatively primitive sailing vessels and horse transport in those days. Later of course he became a gadgeteer and made all manner of wonderful machines out of a tea-kettle which James Watt watched at his father's fireside. He went everywhere on earth and now he even photographs unknown agriculturists in the highlands of New Guinea from the air. The trouble is that we think we know all about

the white man, if we are of that physical type; and what we know all about becomes just ordinary. Were we to sit back and look at our race with the surprised eyes of a child, we might see ourselves as fairy-tale creatures. Alas, we do not always look with a child's eyes; sometimes we think a lot too much of ourselves and get disgustingly self-opinionated and pompous. So it can do us no harm to look at ourselves through other eyes.

What other eyes are better than those of the races who have seen us as strangers in their midst? They have not always known us, so they see the strangeness of our features: "the people with big noses", or the "red-faced men", or "pale-faces" they call us. There is no mistaking that other races have looked upon us as very odd creatures; and what could be more natural? I remember vividly the surprise exhibited by women in southern England when they met families from the north where the women kept the curlers in their hair until the afternoon. One group thought the others were most shockingly careless of their appearance; and the others thought it was proper to keep their hair as pretty as possible for the time when husbands came home from work. So we must expect non-European races, and extremely conservative races at that, to regard us as the strangest and funniest sights they have ever seen.

Of course we do not know what they said about us when gossiping in the market-place. We were not there with our recording unit. No, what we have is the record of the native artist when representing the white stranger. Luckily every tribe has a good artist working somewhere who can convey emotions which we may understand from his work. It is expressed in his own traditions of art, and often looks far more naive than it really is, probably because the white man with his unusual features and dress cannot easily be put into the artistic strait-jacket of traditional canons of proportion.

What a wonderful mirror these artists hold up to us! Knowing that listeners hear little good of themselves, those who look in a mirror can use rose-tinted spectacles. This mirror of the artist's eye, however, is proof against any rose tints. It shows us as we are seen by somebody completely foreign to our ways and thoughts. On the whole the picture

is a good one . . . and, happily, it improves. The white man of today in West Africa is an amusing friendly creature, quite a different sort from the conqueror of older times. The mirror of the artist's eye has persisted throughout historic time and has reflected our actions all over the world in a special way. It reflects not only ourselves, but what we meant to the artist. So this mirror is a fascinating magical glass in which one can perceive things of pleasure and fantasy about one's own civilization; though like all good magic mirrors it has, as we shall see, its moments of horror.

Let us look into the magic mirror and see the pantomime of the White Man in Foreign Parts. It is a lovely pantomime, of that wonderful dream-like nature where we ourselves are playing all the roles: hero, villain, and comic relief. And at the end comes a

thoroughly old-fashioned harlequinade, good-humoured fun poked at ourselves by our friends. Only in this particular play of history by the artists of the world the harlequinade keeps intruding into the story from the very beginning.

Suddenly from the Portuguese ship surrounded by grandees with drawn swords the head of a little man pops up from the crow's-nest, wide-eyed in innocent wonder. That is us, not the grandees: the nice us who is amazed and can take time to look at things. Those grandees only looked at their own finery and their steel-hard souls. The African has shown them on their own terms as they showed themselves to him. He has unconsciously reflected the social cleavages of the age, and the little sailor in the crow's-nest is not the same kind of creature as his masters. But to the powerful Nigerian Kings

*In the 3rd century A.D., when Europeans and Asiatics fought as military equals, the Persian king Shapur carved his triumphant capture of the Roman emperor Valerian on a rock-wall near Persepolis*



*Reproduced from A Survey of Persian Art, Oxford University Press*



*British Museum*

of Benin the white man of those days was a kind of magical asset in his struggle with other African kingdoms. The Portuguese ally from out of the sea was a symbol of power. He is seen in the decorative bronze plaques from the old palace of Benin as himself a decoration, glittering in his armour with his dreaded gun in hand: a cruel, strong ally in a native war.

Across the seas in contemporary Mexico it was different. The Aztec painter saw the white man as the fulfilment of a prophecy of doom. He recorded the cruelties of the conquerors and accepted at the same time the mercy of the new and better religion they brought. Neither Aztec nor white man saw any contrast between the action and the belief; nor were the cruelties strange or startling in themselves, seeing how far they were exceeded by those to which the Aztec's political system accustomed him by its brutal methods of enforced tribute. But the horror will out: the white man is cruel and beastly in the eyes of other people; the magic mirror speaks and from it comes a cry of blood-revenge for wrongs suffered.

*With the expansion of Europe by sea the European became the Man with a Gun. A bronze plaque (left) and an ivory cup (below) from Benin depict the Portuguese navigators as the African saw them: hard-faced and menacing. But who is the little man peeping from the crow's-nest?*



*British Museum*



From the Codex Rios

*Sometimes we get a glimpse of the European as an agent of horror in his impact on the peoples of other continents, as in this Aztec record of Alvarado's exploits in Mexico City in 1520*

Looking at history, one wonders that there is so little of this kind of thing among the representations of the white man. Perhaps we were not so bad as our doubtful consciences make us fear. One hopes it was so.

Certainly we British may be surprised and grateful when we are confronted by our image as reflected in Indian eyes. The "guardians" whose lives Mr Philip Woodruff has so admirably recorded, the members of the post-Mutiny Indian Civil Service, may have deserved recognition for the benevolence of their despotism; but many of the men who came to India before them, especially the conquerors of the 18th century, could claim no such deserts. Credit for good taste and good manners they might have claimed; and the Indian, civilized and courteous, gave the white administrator the place in the pyramid of caste to which these qualities entitled him, looking upon him almost as if he were a native ruler. So we see him here: proud, elegant and big-nosed, the white man made in brass. No doubt he was deeply versed in the arts of graft, and politically was as clever and tricky as his Indian contemporaries:

those were the ways of his time. But all the same the artist has seen in him something of the pleasant English country gentleman of Romney, Gainsborough and Reynolds. He is a conqueror, but not hated. Simply a fact.

Of course the white man is also a trader. Sometimes he is very funny to the people among whom he finds himself. The 18th century was a great age of commercial enterprise in the Far East; and the Chinese and Japanese felt themselves no whit inferior to the stranger in their seaports—quite the contrary. He was a bringer of good things, and at the same time himself the funniest thing imaginable. Well, why not? Their

*To an 18th-century Indian artist an officer of John Company's forces appeared as an agent of foreign government: proud, aloof, insensitive—yet too much a gentleman to be really hateful*



By courtesy of Michael Huxley

laughter is justified for us by the little episode of the Dutchman who kissed a pretty China Miss. Of course the kiss, to preserve the Chinese proprieties, was only on the cheek. But we must smile at us too. Do we look like that at parties? Maybe we do . . . what fun! On the whole the 18th century, in terms of inter-continental exchanges, was a good one for human relations—always excepting the slave trade, though the slaves, for obvious reasons, drew no portraits of their white masters. Commerce thrives on friendship, and the white man was represented smilingly wherever he had given a smile to his colleagues in the emporia of the world.

The 19th century had a different emphasis on life. It had been transformed by the industrial revolution. It was dustier, busier, more prone to exploitation. One meets the man with the gun once more. The gun and the top-hat come again and again into the image of the white man. He teaches the Maori chiefs to use guns in inter-tribal wars like those Hongi Ita celebrated by eating twenty-two of his enemies personally. So, somewhat later in time, we get a highly stylized African portrait of the white man, bravely saluting in his best empire-building manner, in which a gun is the formal adjunct to his otherwise informal costume.

In America the Haida Indians of Queen Charlotte Islands saw other white men. Very different from the tea merchants in China were the whaling captains and fur traders, who despised the Indians and who in their turn were despised and disliked, although the tools and trade goods they brought were accepted as useful supplements to Indian culture. They appear in argillite as bringers of gadgets, blocks and tackle, telescopes, all manner of odds and ends, but all the same they are a hard angular race, and their corsetted womenfolk are prim and stern. A whole attitude to civilization was shown in these argillite figures of the American Indian



By courtesy of the Hon. Mrs Basil Ionides

*A Chinese artist of the same period, on the other hand, saw the European as a comical, if inferior, Outer Barbarian: an agent of commerce, possessing humorous, exotic charm*

artists: an attitude of astonished incomprehension, finding no good human reason for the extraordinary activities that they portray. In the end it had to yield; and trader and Indian alike have been absorbed into common citizenship of the great Dominion of Canada . . . to the present good of both.

The settlement of America left Africa, first discovered and last explored of the continents, to tell its story of the white man in later days. Africa saw not only the empire-builders, but also the Great White Queen whose three-



*By courtesy of the Berkeley Galleries*

(Above) *The Haida Indians of British Columbia, decorating an argillite pipe, portrayed a group of white traders engaged in pointless and frenzied activity aboard their ship: one man seems to be bending over backwards to saw it in half.*

(Below) *In 19th-century Africa the Man with a Gun reappears: but now the gun has become a mere artistic appurtenance, merged in the common humanity of white and black. The latter is concerned to show the former in a state of devotedly loyal emotion—and how well he has hit it off!*

(Right) *And here is the object of loyalty, as a Nigerian artist carved her: “a motherly figure, full-bosomed and chubby-cheeked”, yet no less the Great White Queen, worthy of loving homage*



*By courtesy of the Berkeley Galleries*



*By courtesy of the Berkeley Galleries*



By courtesy of the Berkeley Galleries

*Disrespectfully kind-hearted, the African sees the white man thus as his missionary teacher—*

quarter-length portrait in all the Residencies became a three-dimensional carving in the hands of many a spirited African carver. She was a motherly figure, full-bosomed and chubby-cheeked, and seems to mean much more than just the Queen of a distant country: the artist has accepted her and her countrymen as, in a new sense, human. Hers were the days of the missionaries.

Yes, missionaries. That is another kind of white stranger. The African saw the missionary reading his Good Book gently and harmlessly. He was a good man and quiet. New Gods were brought by the white man, gentler figures than the all-too-human deities of many a more primitive culture. There is no hatred of the white man in these figures, and better still no thought that the missionary was the companion of the colonial exploiter.

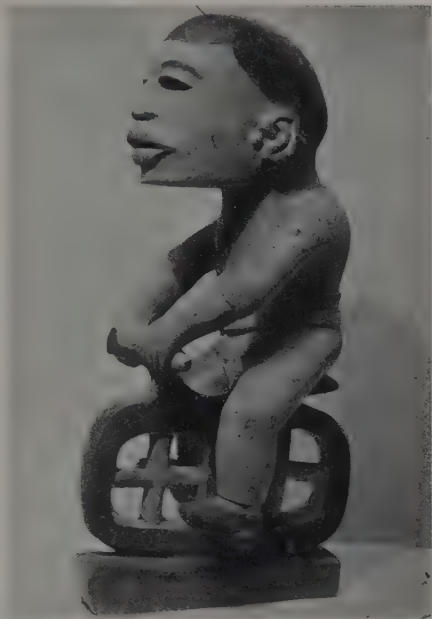
Maybe the white man himself was converted one Christmas or else the colonial exploiter died of neglect, for when we come to the most modern carvings of our collection we find a joyous harlequinade. The white man is the uproariously funny stranger who does the oddest things and yet brings the nicest little aids to pleasanter life.

He teaches in school with a book before him, and his African pupil looks on him with a disrespectful kindness of heart, representing the serious visage and formal dress in just the same way that we do. Or the white man is shown hanging on to his horse most awkwardly, but in fun and not derision; better still he goes pedalling across our pages on his abstract bicycle, so white-facedly intent on getting somewhere across the dusty roads of endless Africa that he hardly notices that he has brought the bicycle to the villagers of Africa and opened new horizons to them.

No, this modern white man is a good fellow: not the subject of politics, but the bringer of useful things like education, medicine, sewing machines and bicycles.

That is the end of our magic mirror in the eyes of other artists. The last picture is a pleasant one. We see ourselves as having altered and grown rather good and gay. Peace on earth to all men of good will. Our artists have unconsciously paraphrased the message of the angels; the world is a friendly place enough if people will learn to smile at each other.

*—or as that lunatic, preoccupied, but far from unwelcome gadgeteer, the Bringer of the Bicycle*



By courtesy of the Berkeley Galleries

# Broadcasting Comes to the Sea Dyaks

by HEDDA MORRISON

*We have had the pleasure of publishing, in the past, a large number of Mrs Morrison's excellent photographs, especially of China. She has lived for seven years in Sarawak with her husband, who is stationed there as an official of the British Colonial Service, and has spent much time among the Sea Dyaks. She now writes of their introduction to a Western novelty and its value to them*

THERE were some children playing at the landing-place of the long-house as we arrived. They greeted us and some of them ran off and told the headman or Tuai Rumah, an old friend called Garu. The long-house was a Sea Dyak one containing some thirty-odd families and situated on the Ngemah River, a tributary of the Rejang which is the largest river in Sarawak. I had come up-river from Sibu, the Divisional capital, with Philip Daly, the Programme Director of Radio Sarawak who was on a trip to demonstrate wireless receivers to a community of Dyaks who were not familiar with them and to make recordings of their songs and stories. Radio Sarawak has only recently commenced operations and although it is making excellent progress it is still not sufficiently well known among the

rural peoples and it is necessary to publicize and explain what broadcasting means.

When we arrived we were a little anxious because the District Officer at Kanowit had told us that morning that there might not be many people in the long-house due to their being busy planting rice and the first thing I enquired was whether there were plenty of people. We were quickly reassured as we scrambled up the notched log which formed the ladder leading up from the landing-place. We shook hands with the children and in a few moments the sound of gongs reached us from the long-house and Garu himself, resplendent in all his party finery, a beautiful head-dress, goatskin cloak, a lot of silver and wearing his best loin-cloth, came down the path running through the rubber garden between the house and the river. The orchestra followed him and many guns were discharged, a form of welcome which the Dyaks particularly love. We were warmly welcomed by Garu and his wife. There were many questions and we were surrounded by friendly, smiling faces.

The orchestra sounded charming on the river bank and the ever-conscientious Philip and his engineer, Mr Chung, immediately set to work to take a recording. The Dyaks were very curious and it was a matter of some difficulty to explain to them exactly what was being done. The music was played back to them and this created great enthusiasm. Once they understood what was wanted they were extremely pleased with the idea and did everything possible to help.

This is typical of the Dyak mentality. Although a relatively backward and unsophisticated people they are quick to grasp new ideas. Radio Sarawak had a somewhat uncertain start. There was no unanimity in Sarawak as to whether broadcasting was desirable or feasible and when the Council of Negri (the Sarawak Legislative Council)





All photographs by the

*There are few roads in Sarawak. Some footpaths exist, but as a rule they only lead from one river system to another and are rough, hard going. For Sea Dyaks the channels of communication are nearly always the rivers, since their whole way of life is centred on them. Below the long-houses will always be found a landing-place where numerous canoes are tied up, whether the stream be a muddy lowland one or a clear upland brook sparkling over pebbles and shingle banks. In the former the canoes are paddled or driven by an outboard engine, while in the latter progress is largely achieved by means of poling*



*The kindly, strong-minded wife of a headman in the Kanowit district. She has been long and happily married, and represents the best type of Dyak womanhood: proud, hard-working, independent and exceedingly hospitable. The long-house was being rebuilt when the photograph was taken, but she made her guests very welcome and entertained them in a temporary house*

*The national drink is a rice-beer known as tuak. The rice is washed beside the river, cooked in lengths of giant bamboo, taken to the house, spread on mats and mixed with a form of yeast. Then it is put with water in large old Chinese jars and left to ferment. Tuak is a fairly mild drink: the usually abstemious Dyaks consume great quantities of it at feasts*



*Early morning toilet on the veranda of a Dyak long-house. Personal cleanliness is one of the most marked characteristics of the Dyak people. Their houses are nearly always by the side of a stream and both grown-ups and children are in and out of the water all day long. Before the introduction of soap they had their own cleansing materials: various roots, pumice and the dried rinds of a wild citrus fruit. Their houses are likewise generally clean and well kept*





*A girl drummer in a Sea Dyak orchestra. The performers in Dyak orchestras are sometimes all girls, sometimes all men or mixed; occasionally a single member of a community beats an instrument. These are always loud and in a strange way perfectly tuned. The gongs are bought and become greatly treasured in Dyak households but the drums are home-made; they are of various shapes, with wooden bodies and deerskin covers which are strung and fastened with rattan canes*



*Dyak children are greatly beloved, though their upbringing is very different from that of Western children. At an early age they start to help in household work, the girls carrying water and firewood, the boys helping with fishing. They show little enthusiasm for school; and their parents' unwillingness to make them do anything they dislike hinders Dyak progress*

*Various herbal remedies for sickness are known but ill-health is closely bound up with primitive fears and superstitions, and most of the treatment given by witch-doctors or manangs consists of the exorcism of evilly disposed spirits which are held to have entered the body of the sick person. A manang is shown treating a case of malaria. Little gifts of rice, eggs and rice-beer are offered to the spirits. The manang then addresses them. "Pulai" (go home), he continually calls, "pulai, pulai, pulai." With a knife he also makes symbolical gestures of excision, which are perhaps connected with the enlarged spleen that is so often associated with malaria*





*Living as they do, each group in its own river system, lacking roads and almost entirely dependent on canoes for travel, the Dyaks are inevitably isolated from contact with their fellows. Broadcasting can break through such isolation; a small local system called Radio Sarawak has recently begun operations. Programmes are put out in several languages, including Dyak, and the people are encouraged to purchase cheap but efficient battery-operated receiving sets. Here, members of a long-house community listen to such a set, which has been brought up the river to be demonstrated to them. They listen with interest to their own songs and stories and to talks on hygiene, education and agriculture given in their own language—and to the latest market prices for rubber and pepper*

did eventually decide to go ahead with such a scheme it was largely due to the interest and enthusiasm of a well-known Dyak headman called Jugah. After much initial work which was greatly helped by a generous financial contribution from the British Government, Radio Sarawak opened in June this year. It has to overcome many difficulties. Although the population of Sarawak is only about 600,000, broadcasts must be made in four languages—English, Malay, Dyak and Chinese—and to achieve this on a slender budget is no easy task.

The Sea Dyaks or Ibans are the largest racial group in Sarawak, numbering altogether about 190,000 souls. They are a lively, intelligent people with great pride of race, living a highly communal existence in long-houses, i.e. villages under a single roof. Just where the Dyaks came from originally is not quite certain but they seem to be part of a great group of peoples who are believed to have originated somewhere up in the Yunnan area of China from where they have spread out all over South-East Asia. The Nagas of Assam, the Moïs of Indo-China and the Bataks of Sumatra all appear to be related to the Dyaks.

The urge to move and travel is still strong among the Dyaks. Because of an unsatisfactory system of shifting agriculture they quickly impoverish the soil and then are quite willing to move on into another area. Individuals love to wander too. Army service in Malaya in the Sarawak Rangers, who are playing a useful part in the struggle against the Communists there, is exceedingly popular and Dyaks are willing to accept jungle work as coolies and labourers in far-away places. The headman of a house not far from Garu's had spent several years in Celebes and New Guinea while Garu himself had worked on the building of telephone lines in Malaya before the war. In days gone by the custom of the young men was to go out in small war-parties to prove their manhood and to acquire merit for the house by bringing back the head of an enemy; but this practice has of course been suppressed for a great many years. One of the most striking characteristics of the Dyak is his hospitality. The stranger must be taken into the house, looked after and fed even if the people of the long-house are themselves short of food. Once my husband and I, visiting a house which we knew to be short of rice, took a supply of our own; but when the Tuai Rumah heard of it he was extremely hurt and offended, for by bringing rice of our own we had called the hospitality

of the house in question and brought shame upon all the people who lived in it.

Garu's house was especially noted for its hospitality and we were touched to find that, although the message announcing our coming had not explained who we were and although the people were scattered on their farms or out hunting, they had nearly all returned home to greet the unknown visitors.

The house is a comfortable, if rather tumble-down one. It will eventually have to be rebuilt but the people are happy with it as it is. We climbed up more notched logs leading to the long-house which was typical of its kind, standing on stilts. In the old days of inter-tribal warfare the long-house was something of a fortress, protected by outer palisades, and the notched pole was drawn up at night to prevent a sudden and murderous incursion by the enemy. The notched log led to a long open veranda or *tanju* running the whole length of the long-house. Each family is responsible for a cross-section of the house, an inner, private room or *bilek*, a section of the communal room or *ruai* outside the private room which extends the whole length of the house and a section of the *tanju* as well.

As we mounted the top of the log chickens were waved over us as a sign of good luck and a row of pretty girls was waiting, each bearing a bottle and a glass of rice-beer or *tuak* to present to the guests. They were prettily dressed in little short skirts which are woven and dyed by the Dyaks themselves, with silver belts and corsets made up of many little rings of silver strung on lengths of cane and silver necklaces and hair ornaments and flowers in their glossy black hair. Had we emptied each cup which was presented to us we should all have been in a state of collapse by the time we entered the house but fortunately Dyak custom decrees that while it is necessary to drink at least a little from each cup, the cup may be passed back to the girl presenting it who must then empty it herself. Thus may the guests maintain their sobriety!

We then entered the *ruai* and wandered up it, being greeted and shaking hands with a great many people, and I recognized old friends from previous visits to the house when my husband had been the local District Officer at Kanowit. We sat down in the place of honour opposite Garu's room and exchanged the news. I do not speak Dyak well but Garu speaks good Malay, a surprisingly rare accomplishment among Dyaks, and so we were able to get on very comfortably. We had to explain once again all

about the purposes of our visit and describe where my husband and I had been since we left the District eighteen months before. The Dyaks wanted to know how long Philip Daly had been in Sarawak and in particular why we had not brought more friends along with us. For our part we enquired after the rice harvest, always a vital topic in Borneo, and how much Garu's people had received from the crop of *engkabang* or illipe nuts. This is a nut which grows freely in the lowlands of Sarawak, the fruit of a large tree which is found and partly cultivated near water-courses. It produces a valuable and very pure edible oil but unfortunately it only bears fruit about once in six or seven years after an especially dry summer. The 1954 harvest has been the largest on record and many thousands of tons have been exported. Since most of the trees are owned by Dyaks they profited greatly from this and the people of Garu's house had made a great deal of money which they had mainly invested in silver jewellery.

We sat down with Garu for a little while and had more *tuak* pressed upon us and then we went off to bathe in a little stream which runs behind the house. There is no piped water supply in a long-house and if you want a bath you go down to the river. Hygiene in the vicinity of a long-house is somewhat elementary. It is dependent on an abundant rainfall which gives the whole place a thorough washing down almost every afternoon and on scavenging pigs which live under the long-house and roam the vicinity. It is not an ideal system but works surprisingly well. There are few flies and dysentery is rare. Malaria is probably the most damaging disease in Sarawak but this is dependent on quite different factors. The houses are clean inside and any waste is simply thrown down through the floor. Housekeeping is fairly simple for the women though they have to work hard pounding and grinding rice and carrying the water for cooking up to the house.

After a refreshing wash and swim we were ready for a meal. Usually when Europeans travel in Dyak country they have their own servant who prepares the food though the Dyaks insist that you eat some of their rice and they often press gifts of eggs and fowls on you as well. But Garu's hospitality knew no bounds and we found that the services of one of the numerous Chinese rubber tappers who work the Dyak rubber gardens on a fifty-fifty basis had been enlisted to prepare an excellent meal of wild pig, chicken, rice and succulent fern tops as a vegetable which we ate sitting

on a mat in Garu's room. In the meantime the bedding of myself, Philip and Mr Chung had been distributed in three different family rooms. The custom when government officers travel in Sarawak is that they stay with the people whom they are visiting. There is no question of camping out (except in the jungle) or of staying in a separate rest-house away from the community.

For the cordial relations of good feeling and mutual respect which exist between Europeans and the native peoples, Sarawak is indebted to a family of great and gifted English administrators, the three Rajahs Brooke. They saw clearly, and as few of their contemporaries did, that the sudden impact of the West on backward peoples can do great harm. They ensured that the process was a gradual one and was accompanied by the closest and most direct personal contact between the people and government officers. At the same time a small-holder economy was encouraged rather than one dependent for development on European-owned estates. The Brooke policies have been highly successful and beneficial and leave Sarawak today a quite unusually stable and contented country.

After dinner a Dyak party was in full swing. The people had taken the opportunity afforded by their return to the long-house to celebrate the traditional festival of the blessing of the whetstones for the swords or *parangs* which they use to clear the jungle for rice planting. This is known as the Begawai Batu. The *parangs* and whetstones are piled up in the *ruai*, little offerings of rice, eggs and *tuak* are made to the spirits, who are also invoked by a group of men intoning a monotonous dirge and beating on the floor with ornamented sticks; they keep it up throughout the night.

Philip and Mr Chung were busily at work taking recordings and they also set up a small battery-operated radio set to enable the people to hear the evening broadcast from Radio Sarawak and other broadcasts from the outside world. This was a centre of much interest. It is a cheap and simple set which is sold through government offices complete with battery which has a life of three months. Most long-house communities can afford such a set, provided they are interested; and their interest depends almost entirely on being able to hear broadcasts in their own language. The preparation of Dyak programmes is not easy since relatively few Dyaks live in the vicinity of Kuching where Radio Sarawak has its headquarters. Edu-

cational talks on hygiene, farming and other topics can be prepared in the capital, but to supplement such talks and to obtain local colour it is necessary to send out teams to make recordings in the countryside.

After some recordings had been made we were invited to take part in various *pireng* ceremonies where the guests help to prepare offerings to the spirits from numerous plates of puffed rice, glutinous rice, eggs, tobacco, salt, betel nuts and other ingredients. The guest piles a little from each plate onto a large plate which is then placed in the rafters covered with a *pua kumbu* or Dyak woven rug. There were several such ceremonies and then we had to visit every private room in turn to help in another similar ceremony where individuals are blessed by having the edible ingredients piled into their hands and eating them. In one room we saw a loom and I asked the owner to set it up to show Philip how it was worked. In another room a man was down with malaria. He was being treated by a Dyak doctor or *manang* and refused our offer of paludrine but felt that our presence would help him to recover. There was a great deal of dancing and a continual noise of Dyak music in which the harmony is produced by a series of small gongs played like a xylophone with the addition of big gongs to add volume. The Dyak men dance a formal war-dance which is graceful and interesting. Some of the girls also danced though they lack the grace of some of the other Bornean peoples.

As the evening progressed the scene became more agreeable. The lights were dimmer and the people split up into little groups, gossiping and exchanging drinks. There was no drunkenness, though a few people fell quietly asleep. The whole atmosphere was a happy and pleasantly relaxed one. We were engaged in the last individual blessing ceremonies when the light of early dawn flooded into the house.



*The old custom of blessing individuals still survives in a very few Dyak houses. On the four plates nearest to Philip Daly are fish, salt, betel, eggs; on the other plates are rice-cakes. Some of each is put into the hands of the person to be blessed, who eats it. In the bottle is rice-beer*

We bathed and the cold water followed by some strong coffee gave us a new lease of life. The ever-hospitable Garu wished to entertain us with a heavy breakfast washed down with beer but this we declined with thanks. Eventually we went down to the landing-place accompanied by the whole village and after many friendly farewells set off in our out-board motor-boat to return down-river amidst kind wishes by our hosts that we should soon visit them again.

# My Worst Journey—X

by JOHN SEYMOUR

*The present article continues a series in which some of our more distinguished contributors place their memorably abhorrent journeys in scales of badness that they have chosen for themselves. By travelling 'the hard way' Mr Seymour has usually gained more from his journeys than most travellers: on this occasion, though the way was very hard, he gained only an unpleasant memory*

MANY people suppose that good, old-fashioned, open-air 'adventure', such as we used to read about in the *Boy's Own Paper*, died with the invention of aeroplanes and motor-cars. Personally I have not found this so, and there have been times when I could have been happy with less 'adventure' than in fact has fallen to my lot. After all, if you do not happen to have an aeroplane or a motor-car by you, these wonderful machines might just as well never have been invented.

I once found myself thus unfurnished on the desert coast of South-West Africa.

Sand-dunes a couple of hundred feet high—they are said to be the biggest shifting sand-dunes in the world—fall straight down into the sea in an unbroken line from Hottentot Bay to the Swakop River, a matter of some two hundred and fifty miles. From the port of Lüderitz to Walvis Bay there is only one place where you can get a drink of fresh water, and nowhere at all where you can get a glass of beer. I came to be stranded on this coast by a peculiar combination of circumstances.

In 1936 I was earning my living by being skipper of a forty-eight-ton motor fishing-vessel with auxiliary sail called the *Cunene*, fishing out of Walvis Bay for snoek. There were no tinned snoek in those days. We salted the fish on board which meant of course that we could stay at sea as long as our salt was unfinished and we had space in our holds: for our little ship about a month at a time.

My Mate was a man named Clinton Andrews, a South-West African sheep-farmer and one of the soundest men I have ever met. He had come to sea for the fun of it. At the time he was about thirty years of age, and I was twenty-three.

Shortly before the end of the snoeking season of the year about which I am writing, one of the snoeking vessels, the *Titania*, was wrecked ten miles south of a slight indentation in the coast called Conception Bay.

On the day before this disaster the entire snoeking fleet (there were that year six vessels) was fishing within a mile or two of the shore. At some time after midnight I was

awakened by the watch. He told me that the wind had altered direction. I went on deck, found that the wind had veered northerly and that we had veered with it and were sailing towards the land. It was a simple job to put the ship about, so as to head her out to sea again, after which I went back to my bunk.

During the day the fleet was scattered, and for a fortnight we cruised the seas alone. It was not until we had dropped anchor in Walvis Bay again, and gone ashore, that we found out what had happened to the *Titania*. Her watch had gone to sleep, failed to note the change of wind, she had veered as we had done and sailed into the breakers at three o'clock in the morning.

Her skipper contrived, by fine seamanship, to send a line ashore and get the crew of fourteen through the breakers in her two boats, in spite of the fact that these had capsized several times in the process. By a lucky chance the *Kernwood*, working close inshore that day in search of snoek, sighted the *Titania's* pickling-tanks, which had been washed high and dry up on the beach. The ship had entirely broken up. Realizing what had happened the skipper of the *Kernwood* sailed along the coast, and finally sighted the stranded crew sitting by the water's edge in their stockinged feet, having walked thus far and decided to walk no further. Fishermen are not good walkers—they seldom have to do it. By another hazardous piece of seamanship a boat was sent ashore, with a line, and the stranded men taken aboard the *Kernwood*. This boat capsized no fewer than seven times during the operation.

After hearing this heavy tale, we set to sea again. The pelagic shoals of snoek took us a couple of hundred miles south, as far as the fabulous island of Mercury, set in Spencer's Bay. And on the way there we saw the *Titania's* two boats, on the steep beach where her men had left them, looking sleek and fat like a couple of sea-elephants. We put them down in our minds as being worth about £40 apiece.

Now a lot of money is made from snoek,

but it is not made by the people who catch them. We of the *Cunene* were chronically hard up. And after a week or two the snoek ceased to bite. We cruised the ocean and could not even catch one for our supper. So one evening we took the *Cunene* in towards the shore as close as we dared, and let go our anchor. Distance is deceptive in that clear air and we were much further from the shore than we thought.

Early the next morning we prepared for the deed that we were to attempt. I had briefed my third-in-command, a Cape Coloured fisherman in whom I had complete confidence, and Clinton and I got ready to jump overboard. We intended to swim ashore, launch one of *Titania's* boats through the surf, and then row out to the *Cunene* again, £40 the richer. We had a cup of tea, stripped to our underpants, put on cork life-jackets, and slipped over the side.

The sea was horribly cold!

After noticing the cold I noticed that I was being strangled: the life-jacket supported my weight by my windpipe. Clinton was similarly inconvenienced, but he had sufficient sense to turn over on his back and he shouted to me to do the same. I did so and the relief was enormous. I could breathe again.

I looked around me. At one moment I was in the bottom of a wide watery valley, and the next lifted high onto a broad crest. I realized that the current was much stronger than I had anticipated. It occurred to me, for the first time, that the whole enterprise was most unsound.

I wished that we had stayed aboard the *Cunene*! The waves were enormous, but slow and smooth. At first they did not do us any harm, but after all—they *had* come right across the South Atlantic, and we could not expect them to be playthings.

We could see the *Cunene* now far away to the southward, and well to seaward of us. Clinton and I kept in touch quite easily, and vied with each other in making facetious remarks. I never felt less facetious in my life.

After an interminable deal of backward swimming I saw a wave approaching which obviously meant business. It seemed to be coming faster than the others and had a crest on top. It came at me—slapped me hard in the face—and forced me downwards, rolling me over and over violently. If one is only used to the waves of the Channel and the North Sea one can have no idea what real ocean combers are like when they begin to feel the bottom. I broke surface, gasping for breath. I was exhausted by that time with cold and fatigue—I am the world's worst

swimmer—but before I could get lung-full another wave hit me. Down I went again.

They seemed to have a sort of wanton, malignant violence, those waves. I felt that they had determined to kill me. They churned me over and over—they roared in my ears—filled my lungs with sea-water—held me down on the creeping sand of the bottom. I could not even fight: my legs and arms would not obey me. I caught sight of Clinton once or twice; there was no comfort in it. The knowledge that he was there just seemed to accentuate the tragedy of drowning. Then I lost consciousness.

The next thing I noticed was that Clinton was bending over me, rubbing me hard with sand and getting quite a lot of it into my mouth. He had fared much better than I had, and the cold hadn't affected him. He was well-fleshed; I was a skinny fellow in those days. He had dragged me into the shelter of one of the *Titania's* pickling-tanks, where we were out of the cold wind but in the sun. I was quite blue—I remember being amazed when I saw my skin—and for some time I was too weak to stand. But I soon warmed up in the sunshine, and we began—well—wondering what to do next.

I had no illusions about launching a boat through that surf, but it was obvious that there was no other way of getting back to the *Cunene*, which we could see far out near the horizon. And we never dreamt that it was possible to walk to the nearest water, which was fifty miles from where we were.

After thinking in a muddle-headed sort of way, we decided to go and *look* at the boats, anyway.

It was five miles to those boats. Five miles—the wrong way—along the soft sand of the beach. It took us until after midday to work one of them, inch by inch, over a ridge of sand and down to the sea. By a great effort we would manhandle one end of her six inches nearer the sea only to find that the other had pivoted five inches back again.

We got her to the water, though, and launched her. Valiantly we pulled her through the first small line of breakers—over a comparative calm into the second line of breakers—a wave swamped us—we were washed back to the beach again, soaked and exhausted. We launched her again. We were swamped again. We tried a third time, with the same result.

We were wet. We were exhausted.

Clinton would have had another try. He just hates to be beaten. But I could see that if we tried for ever we would never succeed. That second line of breakers was a killer.

And we had to conserve what strength we had left for whatever else we decided to do.

There were some rubber boots in one of the boats. We cut these off at the ankles and put them on. We started to walk.

By the time we got back opposite the *Cunene* it was already nightfall. We could see her light, apparently miles out. I never saw anything I longed for so much.

On board the snoeker I had always felt acutely uncomfortable. My bunk was a wooden box almost on top of the stinking diesel engine, and there were tools and spare parts under my thin, fishy and oily mattress. There was no room to sit properly to eat one's meals. She pitched and rolled like a cow. The drinking water, kept in old wine-casks, tasted foul. The tea was horrible. For breakfast we had boiled snoekheads, and the big eyes goggled up at us from the watery mess in the plate. But when I looked at that little light on the ocean, I thought that I would rather be there, in our dear little cabin, than anywhere else on earth.

When we reached the pickling-tank in which I had been resuscitated we had walked ten miles already, and done an extremely arduous day's work; but we knew that we still had fifty miles to go for a drink of water. After a short rest we started again.

You can see the Plough, or Great Bear, at that latitude, and all night I watched it in front of me, slowly swinging over in the sky. On our right were the steep, high sand-dunes; on our left crashed the breakers. As the tide rose we had to scramble along the steep side of the dunes, until we thought that one leg would grow longer than the other. When the tide ebbed we could walk along the narrow beach again.

When morning came and the sun rose, we lay down in the sand and slept for a couple of hours. Then we found it very hard to go on. Clinton did not want to: his legs were causing him trouble; he had once had rheumatic fever. He kept saying that I was to leave him, and go on and send a police camel-patrol back to find him. I pointed out that by the time I had got there, and the patrol had returned, he would be dead. We wasted a lot of energy arguing. But we got up; and kept going, in fits and starts.

The sun became hot, thirst began to attack us, our energy seemed to have left us, and Clinton's legs were getting worse. They went *puffy*, so that if you pushed your finger into them the indentation remained when you took your finger away. He was in agony—every step was like a jab with a knife.

The day passed quickly, in a sort of dreary

delirium. Each of us walked along in his own little hell, with fantasies of *water* churning over and over in his mind. I have often been thirsty, much thirstier than I was then, in fact, and I cannot imagine a more terrible sensation. It is not a sensation that one can describe, of course; and as soon as the thirst is satisfied it is forgotten about, but while it lasts, it is terrible.

When night fell we seemed to have got nowhere. Clinton could only proceed by putting his arm over my neck, and every time he lay down it took longer to get him up again. At about nine o'clock we came to Sandwich Harbour lagoon.

Sandwich Harbour is a big salt-water lagoon, about thirty miles south of Walvis, with an underground fresh-water river flowing into it. Beside this lives a man who is employed to guard the guano-producing cormorants, or rather their eggs, from the neighbouring Hottentots.

We had seven miles to walk round the lagoon to get to the house, but we knew there might be fresh water on the way. Every time we saw a pool away from the lagoon we tried it, but it was always salt—until one pool, which I tried, and found the water in it to be sweet. I spat it out. I was not going to have my friend Clinton park down there for the night. I should never have got him up again in the morning. So on we went.

The last long mile. The last long seven miles! I think they were the worst.

The first thing we came to was the bird-watcher's garden. It was surrounded by a wattle fence, and all he grew was tomatoes. They were hard and green, but we ate several. Whenever I eat a green tomato now, and taste the tart, throat-rasping flavour, my memory takes me back to that garden, under the Great Bear. We did not hurry on to the house, Clinton and I: we dawdled. We wanted to savour the joy of being safe.

The bird-watcher showed the usual South African hospitality. He dressed us up in long woollen combinations and cooked us a colossal meal of fried eggs, bacon and tomatoes. According to what I remember being told in the *Boy's Own Paper* we should have been unable to take more than a sip or two of milk at first, but in fact we wolfed the lot, and then slept like birds.

Clinton's legs were puffy for several days, and when we got him to Walvis Bay he had to stay in bed. I boasted that I could walk the remaining thirty-odd miles into Walvis, but when the bird-watcher said that I could do so if I wished I very quickly climbed up into the truck.

# Geographical Thoughts at Christmas

by Sir HARRY LUKE, K.C.M.G., D.Litt.

*All the events which we celebrate at Christmas and the symbols by which we recall them have their place on the earth's surface and therefore a geographical aspect. The author, well known to our readers, brings a number of these into the revealing perspective of his long and wide experience*

I HAVE known Christmas on all Continents and in many islands; there have been Christmasses in Cyprus and the South Seas and eight consecutive ones in Malta, when my sons were young. Christmas in Malta is partly, at all events, synonymous with the Navy; and a children's party in an aircraft-carrier or in a battleship (in the days of big ships) was an "all-time high" for Christmas parties for the young—and even the not so young.

I seem to remember the Christmasses of my childhood in the London of the 1880s as "white Christmasses", bright, bracing and unsmirched by the smog that befouls our present winters. And, since youthful impressions are the most enduring, I have never been able to work up one hundred per cent of the true Christmas spirit in the tropics, least of all in the part of West Africa once known as "the White Man's Grave", where I spent in all six years of my life. The climate of the White Man's Grave is not adapted to plum-pudding and a hot rum punch; the oil palm is no substitute for the pine nor plastic holly for the genuine "thorn of Christ". I positively hated Christmas Day of 1908 in the Sherbro District of the Sierra Leone Protectorate. Two days earlier the Governor whose A.D.C. I was had been compelled to depose a woman chief, after a long and dramatic inquiry, for inability to control a gang of Human Leopard murderers in her chieftdom. Any hope of rest in that steamy heat after an exhausting week was destroyed for me by an interminable succession of Court Messengers, orderlies and carriers appearing at my mud hut, not in a deputation but maddeningly singly, to "tell Klismas" and, above all, to be "given Klismas".

If I am quite clear as to the least Christmasy regions of my experience, I am equally clear about the converse. I always think of Christmas customs as essentially Nordic and as most appropriately observed in countries where Christmas trees grow. The origin of

these, it seems, and of the Yule log, is connected with the date when we keep Christmas.

It was almost inevitable that the early Gentile Christians should retain some part of the religious customs and festivals of their pagan forbears. Indeed, this is true not only of early Christians. It is true today of the Mayas of Guatemala and Yucatan, whose religion is a synthesis of the pre-Columbian worship of the Great Spirit and the Christian forms imposed on their ancestors by their Spanish conquerors. And even in the Old World paganism did not die without a struggle. One of the most widely distributed and tenacious cults of antiquity was that of the Persian deity Mithras, who, partly because of the Mithraic belief in the immortality of the soul, proved a formidable rival to the infant Christian Church. The date of our Christmas is a relic of that conflict.

December 25 in the Julian Calendar was reckoned as the winter solstice and regarded by the followers of Mithras as the Nativity of the sun, since from that turning-point the sun's power began to grow and the days to lengthen. Egyptian and Syrian celebrants of the Mithraic ritual appeared at midnight of the winter solstice with a loud cry of "The Virgin has brought forth; the light waxeth." The occasion was a highly popular festival and even Christians participated in the general rejoicing at the advent of the new year. For a time the early Christians of Egypt regarded January 6 as the date of the Nativity of Christ. But at the beginning of the 4th century the Western Church adopted December 25 as the day, January 6 becoming the Feast of the Epiphany, and the Easterners followed suit. "Thus it appears", says Sir James Frazer, "that the Christian Church chose to celebrate the birthday of its Founder on December 25 in order to transfer the devotion from the sun to Him who was called the Sun of Righteousness."

The burning of what came to be called the Yule log was a feature of the same sun or fire



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*"It is perhaps not too fanciful to see in Yggdrasil, legendary tree of all trees . . . a remote progenitor of the noble spruce that Oslo now sends to Londoners at Christmas as a gracious token of civic goodwill!"*

festival at the winter solstice in northern, and especially in Scandinavian lands, where Christmas is still called *jul* (yule) and celebrated as it should be. From Yggdrasil, the mythical tree of life of the early Norsemen, both the Christmas tree and the maypole have been thought to stem. If this be true, it is perhaps not too fanciful to see in Yggdrasil, legendary tree of all trees (even if he is an ash and not a fir), a remote progenitor of the noble spruce that Oslo now sends to Londoners at Christmas as a gracious token of civic goodwill.

But even more than Scandinavia is Germany the home of the Christmas tree. It is also the last resting-place of the Magi or the Three Kings, whose bones now lie in Cologne Cathedral, having been brought, it is said, by St Helena (the mother of Constantine the Great) to Constantinople; thence to Milan; and thence, in 1164, as a present from the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa during the period of his excommunication, to Cologne. Tucked away in a corner of Bavarian Franconia is a cluster of little towns which are the quintessence of the mediaeval North: slim Gothic churches with lofty steeples, crooked little streets, gabled houses of mellow brick all painted a different colour and all out of alignment, twisted chimneys with storks' nests and all. The smallest, most perfect of these fairytale towns is called Dinkelsbühl, the very name having a merry, festive ring suggesting apple-cheeked goosegirls driving their flocks along the lanes and jovial landlords dispensing the flowing bowl. Dinkelsbühl is surrounded by a real moat with real water and real swans; is enclosed within unbroken city walls complete with *chemin-de-round*; highly decorative signs of baroque iron work, gaily picked out with gold and projecting far across the street, announce the welcoming inns.

I have seen Dinkelsbühl at all seasons of the year, and each of them endows it with its own phase of beauty. But in winter-time, with the snow lying on the roofs where these

are not too steep to hold it, with the burghers skating on the moat, with the market-place packed with young pine trees waiting to be decked with candles and hung with gifts by the impending purchasers, Dinkelsbühl presents to the eye the perfect Christmas picture as we like to imagine but so seldom see it.

Certainly no such picture is presented by the Latin countries, where Christmas is easily outclassed by the New Year. Is not the French word *étrennes* derived directly from the Latin *strenae*—the presents distributed by the ancient Romans, as are now the French *étrennes*, on New Year's Day? Paradoxically, it was above all in mediaeval France that there flourished the singing of Christmas carols, there called *noëls* from the Latin *natalis*. The revival of carol-singing in modern England is one of the legacies of the

*"The most perfect of these fairytale towns is Dinkelsbühl . . . decorative signs of baroque ironwork . . . projecting far across the street, announce the welcoming inns"*

Leonhard Sch





Bött, photographs by courtesy of Verkehrsamt der Stadt Köln



*The golden reliquary of the Magi in Cologne Cathedral. Made in the form of a basilica, it dates from about the end of the 12th century. (Left) A detail: the Three Kings in adoration*

Oxford Movement, and it was the 19th-century hymnologist Dr J. M. Neale of East Grinstead who put the words of "Good King Wenceslas" to one of the most favoured of the mediaeval tunes, using that of the spring-carol "*Tempus adest florum*" from the hymnal *Piae cantiones*, compiled by Theodoric Peter of Nylandt and published in 1582. The legend of "Good King Wenceslas" has, it must be said, no connection with the carol's original Latin verses.

Wenceslas of Bohemia, called "the Holy", was murdered by his brother in 929 at the age of twenty-two after a brief reign of well-doing and was later canonized. We know rather more (perhaps too much) of the less good King Wenceslas IV, who was certainly not canonized. The famous "Defenestration of Prague" during the Hussite troubles was the last event of his troubled and inglorious reign; and also remembered against him is that he ordered John of Nepomuk, who *did*



Both photographs by Karel Plicka, by courtesy of the Czechoslovak Embassy

*Wenceslas Square in Prague. Wenceslas, Prince of Bohemia ("Good King Wenceslas"), reigned but briefly and was murdered by his brother in 929 at the age of twenty-two. (Right) His statue*

become a saint—in fact the national saint of Bohemia—to be flung from a Prague bridge into the river Moldau, although not, as some have alleged, for refusing to divulge the secrets of the Queen's confessions.

But inevitably my recollections on this theme bring me to Bethlehem and the four successive Christmas Eves I spent in the Church of the Nativity. Each, as it happened, was a "White Christmas"; and the drives from Jerusalem out to Bethlehem late at night for the Orthodox service, under a brilliantly starlit sky and past the Fields of the Shepherds dusted with snow (a route now closed by political barriers), are my most cherished memories of that season and of that holy and troubled land.

Palestine, having been ruled by the Christian Roman Emperors for three hundred years and having become thoroughly Christianized during that period, was subdued by the Arabs in 636 and remained a Moslem





Walmsey

*The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, built in A.D. 326, is the oldest church still in Christian use. Its principal entrance, visible at the end of the courtyard, is barely four feet high*

country ever since, except for the century-and-a-half (1099-1244) when it was intermittently ruled by Crusader Kings and Princes, until the period of the British occupation and Mandate (1917-1948). The fighting between Jews and Arabs which broke out in 1948 has left Bethlehem (whose population consists chiefly of Arab Christians) in Arab hands.

In Roman times, before the 7th century, the Christianity of Palestine had been that of the Orthodox Church; and it is this Church which has been chiefly responsible for preserving unbroken the tradition and existence of the major shrines of Christendom in Palestine. But during the centuries of Arab, Egyptian and Turkish rule, and consequent upon the Latin kingdom established by the Crusaders, Western Christians of the Latin (Roman Catholic) rite and other Christian communities came to exercise special privileges in the Holy Places, including the Church of the Nativity. This is considered with reason to be the oldest church still in Christian use. It is, not only in character but in actual fabric, substantially the basilica which

Constantine raised in A.D. 326 over the sacred Grotto, held by ancient tradition to be the place where the Lord was born. Its principal restoration took place as long ago as the 6th century, at the hands of the Emperor-lawgiver Justinian, and subsequent changes in the basilica itself have been few, although there have been later accretions such as the modern Roman Catholic church now adjoining it on the south. Stewart Perowne, in *The One Remains*, quotes the belief that it alone of the many Christian shrines of Palestine was spared by the Persian invader Chosroes II in 614 because a mosaic over the west door represented the Three Kings arrayed in Persian national dress.

In 1170 the walls of the church were embellished with mosaics by the Byzantine Emperor Manuel Comnenus; and towards the end of the 15th century, when Palestine was under Egyptian Mamluk rule, our King Edward IV had its fine open timber roof covered with lead. This the Turks stripped for conversion into bullets in the 18th century; but in the 20th century another Englishman has restored to the church much of its

(Right) Interior of the Church of the Nativity. Above the columns of Constantine may be seen what remains of the mosaics of the Emperor Manuel Comnenus. From 1842 till 1919 an unsightly wall beyond the columns separated nave from transept and blocked the view of the church's full length. On great occasions the candelabra suspended from the roof of the nave are swung slowly from side to side by a system of pulleys. (Below) The Grotto of the Nativity and its silver star, fixed to the marble floor with silver nails. On the star are inscribed the words: Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est



Willem van de Poll

Willem van de Poll





Young

*The Representative of the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem (centre) leads a procession into the Church of the Nativity on Christmas Eve, 1953, preceded by the parochial clergy in double file*

original majesty. In 1919 Sir Ronald Storrs, then Military Governor of Jerusalem, was inspired to sweep away an unsightly wall of 1842 that separated transept from central nave and in effect divided the basilica in two, thus enabling it to be seen once more from end to end. On the other hand, its principal entrance is anything but majestic; it is a tiny aperture not more than four feet high, designed to prevent camels, donkeys or cattle being driven inside by ill-disposed mediaeval Moslem rulers.

It is probable that no question concerning Palestine took up more of the time of the Egyptian and Turkish rulers of that province, and consumed more of their patience, than the ever-recurring disputes at the Christian Holy Places of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. These arose from the circumstance that the shrines in question are held not in one ownership but in unequal and often fluctuating shares by several highly competitive communities. In this respect, as I can assert from an all-too-sharp recollection, the experience of the British Mandatory Government did not differ greatly from that of its Moslem predecessors. There can be few administrative headaches worse than the ones endured

by those who have had to enforce what is called the "Status Quo of the Holy Places", surely one of the most fluid, imprecise and contested codes in the world.

Fluid and imprecise because, during the centuries in which it was built up from a long succession of conflicting precedents, the holdings of Orthodox, Latins, Armenians, Jacobites, Copts, Ethiopians (and of others who have now lost their representation) within the Churches of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the Nativity in Bethlehem tended to depend upon the numbers, wealth and even strong right arm of the parties concerned and upon the influence they could exert to win the favour of Mamluk Sultan and Ottoman Padishah. But far from imprecise in the detail into which it had to enter in the hope, by no means always realized, of averting the brawls and the resultant bloodshed always liable to occur *ad majorem Dei gloriam*. What, for example, could be more meticulous—but also more necessary—than the provisions relating to the Grotto of the Nativity and to its silver star, affixed to the marble floor with silver nails:

In the semi-circle above the Star of the

Nativity there are eleven icons belonging to the Orthodox, and in front of these icons there are sixteen lamps, four of which belong to the Latins, six to the Orthodox and six to the Armenians. . .

The floor of the Grotto (the Star of the Nativity and the Manger excluded) is *cleaned* on alternate days by the Orthodox and the Latins.

The Star of the Nativity and the Altar together with the icons thereon are *dusted* daily by the Orthodox between 1.30 and 3.30 a.m., i.e. before the prayers at dawn.

The place of the Star is *washed* by the Orthodox and Armenians only, by the Orthodox on Mondays and Saturdays and by the Armenians on Wednesdays and Fridays. Should a lamp break or oil drop on the place of the Star at any time after the Armenians have washed it, the Orthodox have only the right to cleanse it.

The Holy Altar is cleaned by the Orthodox only. . .

The Latins clean daily the northern set of steps leading down to the floor of the Grotto. The five steps leading to the northern door are cleaned by the Latins and Armenians on alternate days.

I once had to take a rapid, highly un-*protocolaire* decision in connexion with one of the nails of the star, which was found one morning to have vanished mysteriously during the night. The nail's intrinsic value was about two shillings; but, had I not short-circuited the protocol, the resultant inter-communal dispute about its replacement would assuredly have grown into a major international row. Officials of the Mandatory Government concerned with the Holy Places did well to bear in mind Kinglake's dictum that "the Crimean War began in the heart of Jerusalem, in the Holy Sepulchre itself."

It is at the Orthodox Christmas, eleven days after ours, that the Church of the Nativity is seen in all its glory. Shortly before midnight on Christmas Eve the Patriarch takes his place on his throne (nowadays it is his Representative, as the present Patriarch is an invalid), mitred and vested in white and gold and supported by his bishops and the parish priests. The church is thronged with Arab Christians of Bethlehem itself and the Villages of the Shepherds, the married women in their pointed mediaeval coifs believed to be a legacy of the Crusades, the men with little white skull-caps under their enormous yellow turbans.

The crucial part of the ceremony begins with the descent of the Patriarch, bishops and clergy into the Grotto below the choir.

Somehow the procession manages to wind its way down the steep, narrow, slippery steps, every one carrying an enormous lighted candle whose fumes, mingling with those of the incense, combine to produce an atmosphere in the small, densely packed Grotto that soon becomes stifling. After the singing of the Gospel the Patriarch and the bishops kneel (not without difficulty owing to the stiffness of their heavy, brocaded vestments) to kiss the star with its Latin inscription "*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est.*" But in the dark shadows of an adjoining recess a Franciscan, his hands buried in the capacious sleeves of his habit, stands by with a watching brief on behalf of his community, silently, suspiciously, on the alert for any breach by the Orthodox of the jealously guarded Status Quo.

Then comes the culminating act, the procession of the Patriarch three times around the entire basilica to the chanting of one of those majestic hymns for which the Orthodox Church is justly famed. Preceded by banners and processional crosses, by the richly vested priests and bishops in double file, his Beatitude moves in slow progress around the

*The Patriarchal Representative resplendent in his robes, as the procession is set in motion*

Robert





*Fratelli Alinari*

*A 6th-century mosaic in the Church of St Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna shows the Magi in Persian national dress: a similar portrayal is said to have saved the Church of the Nativity in A.D. 614*

building to bless the dense congregation abasing themselves on their knees and almost gasping with awe as he comes by. Those near enough kiss the hem of his cope, mothers try to press it to their babies' lips. By an ingenious arrangement the great candelabra in the nave, ablaze with lights, are swung slowly from side to side, while the incense mounts upwards in coils of fragrant blue to what is left of the mosaics of the Emperor Manuel Comnenus. And all the while the choir are chanting their noble doxology:

"Glory in the Highest to Him who is born today  
in a cave,  
Of the Virgin, the Mother of God, in Bethlehem  
of Judaea."

But it would not be what was once called Palestine if the sounds of other liturgies, in other tongues, were not mingling with this in harshest dissonance. At their respective altars to the south of the choir Jacobites and Copts are competing with one another in the production of noise; shrill supplications in Syriac and the language of the Pharaohs offer a dis-

cordant accompaniment to the Greek chants of the Orthodox. For the Copts (their name is enshrined in the second syllable of "Egypt") are the original Christians of the Nile Valley and the only authentic blood-descendants of the ancient Egyptians, whose speech is their liturgical language to this day; the Jacobites are a Monophysite Church of northern Syria and northern Iraq, who not only pray in Syriac—a form of Aramaic, which was the language of Christ—but still use it as their spoken tongue. On this night there are no Armenians, for these keep their Christmas on January 18 of the Western Calendar; but the Ethiopians, an African people of Sabaeen, that is, Southern Arabian origin, are present as guests at the altar of their Coptic fellow-Monophysites.

Christmas, we are told, comes but once a year. Not to all men, however: to the Ethiopians it comes eleven times, in every month except March. That the Ethiopian Church, cut off from the rest of Christendom for more than a thousand years, should have developed peculiarities of its own is not surprising. It



By courtesy of John Wyndham

*Dark and stately, the Ethiopian Melchior takes his rightful place as the most dramatic figure among the Three Kings in the late 15th-century painting of the Adoration by Hieronymus Bosch*

also keeps holy both Saturday and Sunday; on its altars it venerates a replica of the Ark of the Covenant brought back from Jerusalem by the Queen of Sheba when she returned from her fruitful visit to King Solomon; it is the only Church to which it has occurred to canonize Pontius Pilate, whose festival it observes on June 25. And tradition has conferred upon its people the honour of having produced one of the Three Kings, an honour not unmerited, in anticipation, by the tenacity with which the Ethiopians were to preserve their faith through the centuries of their isolation in the heart of Moslem and pagan Africa.

Tradition in this case, as so often in others, is supported by modern critical examination. The "wise men" who came "from the east to Jerusalem" and who were later, though not in the Biblical narrative, described as three in number and as kings, can indeed be placed with some security in a geographical setting. I have mentioned the legend that the Church of the Nativity owed its exemption from ravage to their having been depicted on its walls in Persian national dress; and the Byzantine mosaicists of the 6th century evidently found it natural to portray them thus at Ravenna. Moreover, the name by which they are described in St Matthew's Gospel, "Magi", is of Persian origin, from a root meaning "priest". But the late Sir Geoffrey Callender, in a fascinating article published in *The Church Quarterly Review* (Jan.-March 1947), showed most convincingly that, while the name has probably in their case no ethnic or geographical significance, their skill as astrologers or astronomers undoubtedly has. Their great aim, as such, was to secure a zenith observation of their guiding star; to follow it in a *northerly*, as well as a westerly, direction until it "stood over where the young child was". The duration of *stellae novae* as objects of naked-eye observation is perfectly consistent with their having made, under their New Star's guidance, a three-months' journey of perhaps 1500 miles; and what point of departure would conform more satisfactorily with their character as bearers of "gold, frankincense and myrrh" than the land of Sheba (Saba) in south-western Arabia, long theocratically ruled by "prince-priests"? If, indeed, it was the famous incense route that they followed, then not only does this readily explain their bringing of myrrh, a principal product of Sheba deriving its name from a Sabaeen word; it also accounts for the traditional presence among them of the Ethiopian, Melchior, whose country was a

source of the same commodity and, as shown in an article in *The Geographical Magazine* for July 1954, was in close (though often hostile) relations with its neighbours just across the Red Sea.

Thus fortified in our traditional beliefs, we may return in spirit to the Church of the Nativity. It is all racy of the soil, this eastern Christmas service in the Lord's birthplace, a notable example of the exuberance of the Oriental Christian in proclaiming his spiritual loyalties and certainly the most comprehensive commemoration of its kind even if it is not the most restful. But in these surroundings and at this moment the more sensitive Westerner can surely forget the noise and the disorder. With but a little imagination it should be possible for him or for her to picture, in the place of the hierophants mitred and coped in gold, chanting their litanies of praise and thanksgiving in a grotto beside a star, those three crowned men of old whom a star had guided at that first Epiphany to this very spot for the self-same purpose. And to some there may recur the lines of a poet who has interpreted so well the atmosphere of this eastern land:

Three Kings have come to Bethlehem  
With a trailing star in front of them.

And when Mary asks:

"What would you in this little place,  
You three bright Kings?"

then Balthazar, "Lord of Ind", and Caspar "of the rocky North" explain the purport of their coming and of their gifts of frankincense and gold. Last to speak is the black King from the Incense Coast, prototype of the Ethiopian priest at the neighbouring altar and the most dramatic figure of the three. To Hieronymus Bosch Melchior is young and upright, but to Flecker he is an old man nearing the end of his days, making the supreme effort to travel from the extremity of torrid Arabia to greet his new-born Lord:

"I am the dark man, Melchior,  
And I shall live but little more  
Since I am old and feebly move.  
My Kingdom is a burnt-up land  
Half covered by the drifting sand,  
So hot Apollo shines above.  
What could I bring but simple myrrh,  
White blossom of the cordial fire?  
Hail, Prince of souls and Lord of Love!"

Then the Chorus of Angels sings, as the choir might sing this night:

*Suaviole, o flos Virginum,  
Apparuit Rex Gentium.*

# Canaletto and the English Landscape

by F. J. B. WATSON

*Views of Venice by Canaletto, or 'of his school', have been familiar in English country houses ever since their young 18th-century masters made a habit of the Grand Tour. The origin of his much less familiar pictures of England is explained by Mr Watson, who is Assistant Director of the Wallace Collection and author of Canaletto (Paul Elek). Several of the paintings here reproduced are being shown this winter at the Burlington House Exhibition of 18th-Century Painting*

CANALETTO'S relationship with the English had always been a special one. His earliest known commission, painted in 1722, shortly after his student years in Rome had ended, came from a bankrupt Anglo-Irish operatic impresario, Owen McSwiny, who was acquiring paintings at Venice for English collectors. Success came early and easily to Canaletto. Five years later the same agent was still purchasing the artist's works for export to England, and in a letter to one of his English clients he complains that the artist "has more work than he can do, in any reasonable time, and well", and as a result of this success has become spoiled, difficult and expensive. When that entertaining traveller the *Président de Brogues* visited Venice a decade later he found that he could not afford to buy one of the artist's views of Venice, much as he admired them, for "*les Anglois ont si bien gâté cet ouvrier en lui offrant de ses tableaux trois fois plus qu'il n'en demande.*"

The enormous numbers of his views of Venice still to be found in this country provide ample evidence of the favours showered on Canaletto by the English. With such profitable patrons flocking to his very door there seemed no reason whatever why Canaletto should have ever wished to leave his native city. Nevertheless, at the age of nearly fifty he determined to visit London. The reasons for this decision are not easy to fathom at this distance of time. A sort of middle-aged restlessness may have possessed him, for in the early 1740s he perhaps revisited Rome where he had spent his years of apprenticeship as a landscape painter. A contemporary tells us that one reason for coming here was to put the large sums he had earned by his painting into English funds, as being a safer investment than anything the rather shaky stock-market of Venice could provide. But probably the overriding cause was the outbreak of the War of the Austrian

Succession in 1741, for this made continental travel much less attractive to the English and thus seriously reduced the most important part of the artist's clientele. Whatever the precise reason may have been, Canaletto arrived in London sometime in May 1746 furnished with a letter of introduction from Joseph Smith, the recently appointed British Consul at Venice and owner of the finest collection of Canaletto's works ever assembled (a collection which now belongs to H.M. the Queen).

A letter dated May 20, 1746, addressed to the second Duke of Richmond by his friend and former tutor, Thomas Hill, shows how useful this introduction proved. After mentioning how "Canales, alias Canaletti, is come over with a letter of recommendation from our old acquaintance the Consul of Venice to Mac[Swiny] in order to his introduction to your Grace," it concludes "I told him the best service I thought you could do him w<sup>d</sup> be to let him draw a view of the river from y<sup>r</sup> dining room, which in my opinion would give him as much reputation as any of his Venetian prospects."

In fact, two paintings resulted from Thomas Hill's suggestion and both are still in the possession of the present Duke of Richmond. The view from Richmond House across the river towards St Paul's was well chosen as a subject for the artist's first London painting. Canaletto must have found it particularly sympathetic from its similarity to one of his favourite views of his own city—the view across the Bacino di San Marco looking towards the domed church of Santa Maria della Salute. The second of the Duke of Richmond's paintings, if less in Canaletto's Venetian vein than his first, throws an even more interesting light on the topography of 18th-century London. It shows the view up Whitehall seen from an upper window on the landward side of Richmond House. These



By courtesy of the Duke of Richmond & Gordon

*Canaletto's first London painting: the view from Richmond House across the river towards St Paul's, commissioned by the Duke of Richmond in 1746. On the river, the brightly coloured and gilded barge of the Lord Mayor, attended by another belonging to one of the city companies, is being rowed downstream to Westminster whilst smaller craft ply all around it. The view throws an interesting light on the topography of 18th-century London, especially as*

*showing how St Paul's and Wren's city churches then dominated the surrounding city buildings. There is no embankment road along the river; each of the great houses has its own terrace by the riverside and its own landing steps, while the south bank of the river had not yet been developed for housing at all. Only the tile-roofed sheds and wharves of the stone- and timber-merchants who occupied this part of London in the 18th century are to be seen*



*By courtesy of the Duke of Richmond & Gordon*

*The view up Whitehall from an upper window on the landward side of Richmond House. Prominent on the left is the Holbein Gate, a survivor from the 16th-century royal palace of Whitehall. This building stood almost at the point where Downing Street now enters Whitehall. It was pulled down in 1749-50, a few years after Canaletto's view was painted, owing to the obstruction it presented to traffic. At the right of the Holbein Gate is the southern end*

*of Inigo Jones's Banqueting House with the sloping roof of the Lottery Office below it. Between these groups of buildings Whitehall stretches northwards towards Charing Cross to a point near that from which the view of Northumberland House on page 420 was painted. In the foreground on the right Canaletto has shown a corner of the stable yard of Richmond House (detail on page 416) with old Montagu House and its oval forecourt visible just beyond*



By courtesy of the Earl of Warwick

(Above) Canaletto's painting of the great entrance gate to Warwick Castle, seen from the outside. Caesar's Tower is at the left and Guy's Tower at the right. The austere grey walls of the mediaeval castle make a charming contrast to the diminutive figures in the foreground in their highly coloured 18th-century costumes. (Below) Canaletto's painting of Alnwick Castle. This view is particularly valuable, as it shows the building before Robert Adam's 18th-century and Anthony Salvin's 19th-century restorations totally altered its original character





By courtesy of the Dean & Chapter of Westminster

Reproduced from *The History and Treasures of Westminster Abbey*, by Laurence E. Tanner (P)

*The Procession of the Knights of the Bath at Westminster Abbey, 1749, was painted by Canaletto for Bishop Wilcocks, Dean of Westminster, who was Chaplain of the Order. The Dean is depicted in front of Lord De La Warr, the Acting Great Master, who walks last in the procession*

two paintings are reproduced on pages 410-411 and details from them on pages 416-417.

It was to the Thames with its constant reminders of his own Venetian canals that Canaletto chiefly turned for his London subjects. When he arrived in England the new bridge at Westminster was nearing completion and was a focus of the greatest interest for Londoners. It was the first bridge to be built over the Thames at London since London Bridge had been put up in the Middle Ages. Canaletto's drawings and paintings of Westminster Bridge show it in almost all stages of construction. The large drawing at the British Museum (page 418) perhaps dates from about 1748; the parapet is completed though no traffic is passing over the bridge, which owing to a subsidence was not opened to traffic until 1750. That Canaletto still looked at London with completely Venetian eyes is only too clear from his utter misunderstanding of such northern architectural features as the Gothic window tracery in the great east window of Westminster Hall. Moreover, he has drawn an embankment road resembling a Venetian *fondamenta* (or quay) running along the south bank of the river towards Lambeth Palace, though in reality no such thing existed there for many years afterwards. But in Canaletto's Venice a canal without a *fondamenta* was unthinkable, so London's riverside must have one too.

A year or so later the artist showed a greater understanding of Gothic architecture in a view of the west front of Westminster Abbey, painted to record the Chapter of the Order of the Bath which took place on June 26, 1749 (page 414). This shows the procession of the Knights emerging from the door below the great western towers, only recently completed to Hawksmoor's designs. The scene, with the scarlet cloaks and plumed hats of the Knights, must have reminded the artist forcibly of the frequent ceremonial processions in Venice in which the Doge and red-cloaked Procurators took the leading part.

Amongst Canaletto's numerous views of the Thames one of the most interesting is the drawing of Old London Bridge (page 418) in the British Museum. This bridge, formerly one of the great sights of Europe, with picturesque buildings, mostly mediaeval, along its entire length, was finally pulled down in 1830.

The Duke of Northumberland was one of Canaletto's best English patrons. Apart from several Venetian views which were no doubt bought in Italy, the present Duke possesses no less than seven English views by the artist, all of which were commissioned by his ances-

tor, Sir Hugh Smithson. This gentleman inherited the vast Percy estates through his wife, and was afterwards created Duke of Northumberland. Smithson was well known for his encouragement of the arts, and Canaletto began to work for him soon after he had finished the two great London views for the Duke of Richmond which have already been described, for two, at least, of the Northumberland Canalettos must have been painted in 1747. One, showing Windsor Castle from the south-east, bears an inscription stating that Canaletto actually finished painting it on June 16, 1747, at Percy Lodge, in the neighbourhood of Iwer, one of the Northumberland properties. In view of the proximity of Eton and Windsor it seems very likely that Canaletto painted the well-known picture of Eton College (page 420) at about this time. In spite of the fact that this view gives every appearance of verisimilitude, a comparison with other contemporary views and plans of the same scene shows that Canaletto did not hesitate to take liberties with the topography of a scene when it suited his artistic purposes.

It was no doubt soon after he had inherited the Northumberland properties in 1750 that Smithson commissioned from Canaletto a series of views of the principal Northumberland family seats. Probably the first of these to be painted was old Northumberland House (page 420) near Charing Cross. This 16th-century building was standing until 1874 when it was pulled down to make way for Northumberland Avenue. The statue of Charles I to the right of it was moved to its present position at the top of Whitehall and the stone lion over the entrance taken to Syon House across the river from Kew where it can still be seen dominating the river-front of the house, another Northumberland home of which Canaletto also painted a view at about this date.

Shortly afterwards and sometime before 1752, Canaletto must have travelled up to the extreme north of England in order to paint still another of the seats of the Percys, the great mediaeval castle at Alnwick (page 413). In addition to this visit to Northumberland, Canaletto must have undertaken fairly extensive travels about England during his stay, for he painted views of buildings as distant from London as King's College, Cambridge, Badminton House and Warwick Castle. A number of views of the Castle are still in the possession of the present Earl of Warwick. One of them is reproduced here (page 412).



*By courtesy of the Duke of Richmond & Gordon*

*Details (above) from "The View from Richmond House": a maid-servant at an upper window; and (below) from "The View up Whitehall": a picturesque glimpse of contemporary London domestic life*

*By courtesy of the Duke of Richmond & Gordon*





*By courtesy of the Duke of Richmond & Gordon*

*A detail from "The View from Richmond House", which shows, in the "knubbly little figures of oarsmen", Canaletto's conventionalized painting technique referred to by the author on page 422*

But in spite of the patronage which these distinguished English noblemen showered on him, all was not well with Canaletto. In July 1749 George Vertue, the engraver and indefatigable collector of information relating to the arts in England, noted in his quaint phraseology: "On the whole of him something is obscure or strange, he does not produce works so well done as those of Venice or other parts of Italy which are in collections here, and done by him there . . . which has much strengthened a conjecture that he is not the veritable Canaletto of Venice, whose works have been bought at great prices". In fact, we now know that Canaletto was the victim of his own success and was the dupe of a plot hatched by unscrupulous London picture-dealers. This plot is best described in the words of an 18th-century English painter, Edward Dayes. In his memoirs he writes: "The picture-dealing tribe . . . carried their assurance so far as to deny that Canaletti was the person who painted his pictures at Venice . . . and when by their provocation he was tempted to sit down and produce some to convince the public, they still persisted that

the pieces produced were not in the same style, an assertion which materially injured him for a time and made him almost frantic. By this scheme they hoped to drive him from the country, and thereby prevent him detecting the copies they had made of his works, which were in great repute."

In order to defeat their malpractices, Canaletto determined to exhibit one of his own works in public as a convincing proof of his genuineness. Accordingly, on July 26, 1749, he inserted an advertisement in the daily press notifying the public that "A View of St James's Park" he had recently completed would be on exhibition each morning and afternoon for a fortnight at his lodging at "Mr Richard Wiggan's, Cabinet Maker in Silver Street, Golden Square", a house which still stands today.

The painting which Canaletto exhibited was probably a large view of the Horseguards now in the possession of the Earl of Malmesbury. It evidently became a popular subject for the artist repeated it on several occasions. Another example is the drawing in the British Museum here reproduced (page 419). This



British Museum



British Museum

*Westminster Bridge, drawn about 1748. The last arch was keyed in on July 20, 1746, only two months after Canaletto's arrival, and the bridge was actually completed in the following year. It was not, however, opened to traffic until November 17, 1750, for late in 1747 one of the piers began to subside and two of the arches had to be pulled down and rebuilt in a lighter form*

*Old London Bridge. At its northern end (to the left of Canaletto's drawing) the water-tower with its pumping-house below, which supplied much of the city with its water in the 18th century, appears between the spire of Wren's church of St Magnus Martyr and the Monument. At the extreme right is the classical façade of the Fishmongers' Hall, facing across the river.*

the Horseguards. In the centre are the old Horseguards buildings which were  
 pulled down in the winter of 1749-50. Towards the right of the picture is  
 the corner of the still surviving Treasury, faced with stone. Beside it, but  
 built of brick, is old Litchfield House, known today as 10 Downing Street

*One of Canaletto's later views of the Thames : the Chinese hump-backed bridge  
 at Hampton Court. This bridge, which was an entirely wooden construction,  
 was opened on December 13, 1753. Canaletto's drawing was presumably done  
 some six months or more later, for the trees are shown in full summer leaf*



British Museum



British Museum



*By courtesy of the Trustees of the National Gallery*

*(Above) Canaletto's painting of Eton College, which reveals his unfamiliarity with the Gothic style.*

*(Below) Northumberland House, Charing Cross. To the right is the statue of Charles I set up in 1674*

*By courtesy of the Duke of Northumberland*





Photograph by courtesy of Mrs H. Finberg

*"The Representation of Chelsea College, Ranelagh House and the River Thames", exhibited in 1751*

view, like the Malmesbury painting, must date from the summer of 1749 at the latest, for it shows the old Horseguards buildings which were pulled down in the winter of 1749-50, to make way for William Kent's new buildings begun in the following year and still a familiar London sight.

Although Canaletto's stay in London continued over a number of years he did not reside in England absolutely continuously. On at least two occasions he went back for a short visit to his native city. It was on his return here from one of these visits to Venice that he again found it necessary to exhibit an example of his work in public, doubtless because his enemies, "the picture-dealing tribe", had again been spreading false reports about him. An advertisement again appeared in the press, couched in similar terms to the earlier one. It announced that "Signor Canaletto . . . has painted the Representation of Chelsea College, Ranelagh House and the River Thames" and that the picture was to

be seen morning and afternoon "at his lodgings at Mr Wiggan's . . . for fifteen days from this Day, the 31st of July (1751) from Eight o'clock in the morning to One in the Afternoon and from Three in the Afternoon to Six at Night".

The painting he exhibited (this page) is now in an American private collection. It shows the view across the river from the south side towards the splendid pile of Wren's Chelsea Hospital. Adjoining this building is the famous Rotunda of Ranelagh, the most celebrated pleasure-resort of mid-18th-century London. This curiously shaped building with its tapering and truncated roof was described by Mrs Sage, the first English woman balloonist, as looking just "like a tea caddy" when she saw it from the air in 1783.

Exactly when Canaletto left London for good is not known. One of his later views of the Thames must have been the drawing of the delightful Chinese hump-backed bridge across the river at Hampton Court, opened



Photograph by courtesy of Messrs Knoedler

*The Box Hill Capriccio, in which Canaletto introduced imaginary Venetian incidents into an English pastoral landscape*

in December 1753 (page 419). What was perhaps almost his last view of an English scene to be painted in this country shows another wooden bridge across the Thames—old Walton Bridge. It bears an inscription stating that it was drawn after *il mio Quadro Dipinto in Londra 1755* (after my painting executed in London 1755). This, too, shows a summer landscape and must therefore have been painted in the middle of the year, and it was probably not long after this that the artist returned finally to Venice.

How far Canaletto's long sojourn in England affected his style of painting is not easy to say. Probably not very much. The paler tones and hazier atmosphere of northern landscape perhaps caused him to adopt a cooler palette than he had been accustomed to use for the sun-drenched scenes of his native country. It is sometimes claimed that the Dutch paintings he must have seen in English

collections inspired the tight, blobby and conventionalized way of painting he adopted in his later works done in Venice. This mannerism especially affected his figure painting, but a glance at the knubbly little figures of oarsmen rowing the state barges in his earliest London view (page 417) will show that this sort of figure-drawing was already to be found in his work when he arrived here. There is some evidence, too lengthy to set out here, that he continued to use his stock of English drawings to paint views of London after his return to Venice; it is equally likely he painted Italian scenes whilst in London.

An interesting example of a painting which combines both English and Venetian features is illustrated on this page. It is of a type much favoured in Italy at the period, an imaginary landscape in which architectural features from widely dispersed sites are grouped together in a landscape in a purely capricious manner—hence its Italian name, *Capriccio*. In this instance a ruined triumphal arch, a palace in the Palladian style, and an Italianate bridge over a river on which a group of Venetians

are being rowed in a gondola, have been introduced into a landscape of a thoroughly English and pastoral character. In the background of this landscape is to be seen a view usually identified as Box Hill, near Dorking in Surrey, on the slopes of which the artist has placed an Italian walled town and another triumphal arch. This painting, together with another in the same vein, was probably commissioned by either the third or fourth Lord King, for it was sold by their descendants some years ago. Ockham Park, the ancestral home of Lord King's family, was in the neighbourhood of Box Hill. Whether it was in fact painted in England or later on at Venice cannot be said for certain, but it is an interesting example of Canaletto's adaptation of English motives to purely Venetian ends, and shows him viewing the English landscape through truly Venetian spectacles.

# Christmas in the Falklands

by SIR MILES CLIFFORD, K.B.E., C.M.G.

*This is an article which should be read and pondered in those "other quarters" whence come the "persistent claims" on the Falkland Islands to which the author refers. He concluded a distinguished career in the Colonial Service with seven years as Governor of the Islands: years which will be long remembered by the Islanders for the introduction of much-needed amenities and by the men serving in the Antarctic Dependencies for the visits that he made to their scattered outposts*

THERE are perhaps few of our Colonies about which so little is known as the Falkland Islands, yet despite their great distance from England—close on 8000 miles by the normal ship's course—there is none which is more essentially British in character, none in which the traveller will feel more immediately at home. The Colony has no 'natives' in the popularly 'accepted' sense of that much-abused term for, so far as is known, it was uninhabited before the arrival of de Bougainville in 1764 and its present population, numbering roughly 2400, is derived in the main from British stock, with some Scandinavian strains.

Comprising two large islands—East and West—divided by the Falkland Sound and about two hundred smaller ones, with an aggregate area of 4600 square miles, the Colony has been effectively administered since 1833, which constitutes a sufficient answer to persistent claims from other quarters. The Islanders are intensely loyal and were the other side prepared to submit the decision to a plebiscite (which, of course, they are not) there is no doubt that the people would be one hundred per cent in favour of remaining precisely as they are.

For the past hundred years the islands have been given over almost entirely to the ranching of sheep for wool and with unimportant exceptions the land is held in freehold, and for the most part by absentee owners. The climate is best described as dour with a persistent wind, which is its most trying feature; and except on the all-too-rare fine days when it has a beauty all its own the landscape, treeless and boulder-strewn, appears inhospitable to a degree—in marked contrast to the Falkland Islander himself who is of all people the most hospitable. Viewed from the air it is even worse, for the poor starved-looking pastures are not only interspersed with rivers of stone and rocky out-crops but with innumerable bogs and tarns and one is apt to wonder how even the sheep can survive such depressing circum-

stances; it is not surprising that the death-rate amongst them is so woefully high.

These conditions have inevitably produced a tough and hardy people and, because they have been thrown so much on their own devices, an extremely resourceful one, for there are few things to which the Islander cannot turn his hand, from shearing a sheep to building his own house. He is also, again quite understandably, extremely conservative and inclined to be suspicious of anything new until it has proved its worth. The population is divided almost equally between Stanley, the seat of government situated on the East Island, and the sheep farms on the East and West Falklands and some of the outlying islands. Collectively the Islanders describe themselves as "Kelpers" from the kelp (*macrocystis*) which grows so abundantly around their shores, while the farm dweller is further distinguished with the label of "Camper" from the Spanish word *campo*—hence "Camp"—which is applied to the whole countryside beyond Stanley. The way of life of the two communities differs substantially; the one urban and compact with its shops and cinema, its electric light and running water, its Town Hall and Hospital, its pubs and other social amenities;



A. J. Thornton



J. Sladen

*Looking north over Stanley, the capital of the Falkland Islands, towards the bay and the desolate land sloping down to it. The town has a population of some 1300 persons; most of the houses are built of timber which, like the greater part of the supplies for the Colony, has to be imported*

the other still much as it was at the turn of the century—the small settlement with the manager's house, the wool-shed, the cook-house and the cottages of the head shepherd and the navy boss concentrated within easy reach of the jetty from which the wool is shipped; and, still further afield, the outside house with the lonely shepherd and his family living in splendid isolation.

My own connection with the Islands dates from the back-end of 1946 when, greatly to my surprise, I found myself appointed to them as Governor—presumably to give me an opportunity of cooling off after twenty years or more in Nigeria. We arrived on November 26 and I remember clearly how attractive the little township of Stanley looked with its cluster of wooden houses sloping down towards the harbour, their coloured walls and painted roofs and their porches gay with flowers combining with the blue water of the harbour to present an almost Mediterranean effect. Up the drive which leads to Government House the gorse was a riot of gold and the daffodils were nodding bravely on either side. Christmas was upon us before we had time to turn round and

because one's thoughts turn naturally at this season to friends overseas I will endeavour to describe a typical Falklands Christmas.

In Stanley the Falkland Islands Company's store and the smaller shops will have been filled with Christmas goods for a month or more beforehand, if the mail has been delivered to time, and it is well not to leave one's shopping too late, for the Stanley folk will not only have their own purchases to make but will have been busy executing commissions for their friends in the Camp who know quite well what is available from a popular broadcasting feature "Round The Shops". The momentum starts to build up with the closing of the schools and the annual prize-giving round about December 16, for this is followed by a round of children's parties. Then, early on the 24th, visitors begin trickling into town from the nearer farms; most of them ride in for there are no roads and there is a run on paddock accommodation, but man and beast are duly fitted in and there is an air of festivity abroad. There will be a cinema show in the evening and the public houses will do a roaring trade, but there will be a midnight service at the Cathedral and



Dr W. J. S.

(Above) Stanley Harbour. In the middle distance the Royal Research Ship John Biscoe lies alongside the Falkland Islands Company's steamer Fitzroy, the Colony's only means of physical communication with the rest of the world. (Below) The Cathedral at Stanley: one of the few buildings made of brick

Dr W. J. S.





Popper Ltd



(Above) A typical settler's house in the Falklands, amid scenery reminiscent of the Western Isles of Scotland, broken up by deeply penetrating arms of the sea.

(Left) Settlers and their children. In so sparse a community it is hard to give children normal or even adequate schooling. In the past they have had to depend on an itinerant teacher, who might call only once in ten weeks; but now an effort is being made to establish schools to which the children will themselves go. Every year a few people emigrate from the Falkland Islands, mostly to Australia and New Zealand; measures for encouraging immigration are being actively pursued.

(Opposite, top) Horses, still important to the sheep-farmers, and boats were once the only means of getting about among the islands; they have been supplemented for the past seven years by a first-class local air service. In addition, there is now a radio-telephone on every farm.

(Opposite, bottom) The Colony's only export, seen while still on the hoof. All of the wool is shipped to England.

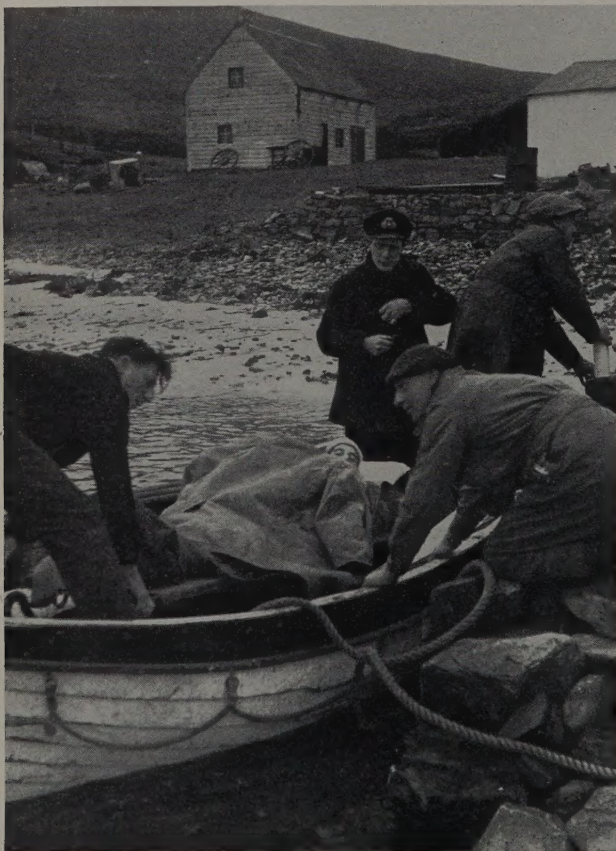


the twot her churches, and these will be well attended.

Christmas Day itself is very much a family affair and, as with us, essentially a children's day; in fact the only notable departure from our own established ritual is that as a rule there is no Father Christmas, no Christmas Tree, and that turkey gives place to Christmas lamb garnished with the first of the new potatoes from the garden. Lamb is a 'must' and I well remember the consternation caused one year when a large consignment of lambs was lost from a cutter-boat which struck a reef on its way in. The old and bedridden are especially remembered and the local branch of the Red Cross will have ensured that presents are delivered to

*Sickness presents special problems in the Falklands. A boat from the small motor fishing-vessel Philomel is taking a sick person off one of the lesser outlying islands*

*Dr W. T. Storden*



each. At noon everyone will be gathered round the wireless to listen to the Queen's message to her people and, in the evening, there will be a special broadcast to the Camp; hitherto, with only worn-out ex-army equipment available, this was rather a hit-or-miss affair, but this year with a new 5-kilowatt transmitter and studio equipment, installed just before I left, reception should be excellent both in the Camp and the Antarctic Dependencies, and the volunteers who provide the programme will be well repaid for their trouble. The Telegraph Office will have been working overtime and the radio-telephone system between Stanley and the farms and between one farm and another will also be going full blast. Again, if the weather has been good, the Air Service will have been bringing in late visitors from further afield and it is safe to say that these two institutions have put a new emphasis on Christmas in the Falklands.

My own day would start with church, then to the Hospital to give my good wishes to each of the patients and the staff, and so back to Government House to entertain the officials and their wives and Members of Council to sherry and Christmas cake and to hear the Queen's speech; a sandwich lunch so that the staff could have their midday feast in style; at six o'clock a personal message to the Camp and the Dependencies in the special broadcast programme and at night a large dinner-party followed by traditional games.

The following day brings in the real business of the Christmas holiday, which is the annual Race Meeting, a two-day affair with serious racing on Boxing Day and gymkhana events the day after. The programme is a very full one and from about nine o'clock onwards the people will be wending their way up to the race-course, some in cars or on motor-cycles, others packed into lorries, some cycling, some walking, others on horseback; it is the big occa-



*From the author*

*At Christmas everyone spends two days at the races, which are extremely popular. One of the highlights of the meeting is the Governor's Cup: the winner is seen being congratulated by the author*

sion of the year and everyone gets to it who can. The races are keenly contested and thoroughly enjoyable; the entries are, for the most part, working horses from the farms and for myself I wish that they all were, for the few imported race-horses (from Patagonia) have too great an advantage and are apt to run away with the more important events, such as the Governor's Cup on which there is an annual sweepstake. The standard of riding is high—not least so amongst the girls, and in particular the McLeod family—the Totalisator, manned by volunteers, does brisk business and a good time is had by all. The meeting culminates in the annual Sports Association ball and prize-giving which is held in the Town Hall; the big room is gaily decorated with flags and bunting and there will be at least two hundred couples on the floor, for dancing is wildly popular and they can never have enough of it. There is an impressive display of prizes and the crack jockeys such as Joe Bulter, who has won so many races that he can't count them, come up again and again to the dais.

Dancing will continue until one or two in the morning and 'celebrating' for some time after that; but all good things come to an

end and in the grey light of morning the Camper will be seen saddling up and jogging off back to his farm, for the holiday falls at the height of the shearing season when every hour means money to the harassed manager who is nowadays so often short-handed. It is here that the Air Service is a great help, for if the weather is good it can make several trips in succession and carry the visitors home in a fraction of the time formerly taken; in minutes instead of hours or days.

It will be evident that except where the aircraft is chartered it is only those within riding or boating distance of Stanley who can come in for the holiday and for the rest each station celebrates Christmas in its own way, taking its real holiday after shearing is over. In some cases a dance will be held in the cook-house and this will be attended by visitors from neighbouring farms; these are heroic affairs and since they provide a rare break in monotony both hosts and guests make the most of every unforgiving minute. The womenfolk will have been busy cooking and baking for a couple of days beforehand and everyone contributes his quota of drink; music is provided by a squeeze-box and dancing continues into the small hours.



From the author

*Clifford House on Signy Island, South Orkneys. Reports from seven weather-stations in the Falkland Islands Dependencies, collated in and broadcast from Stanley, serve the whole South Atlantic*

A cook-house dance is an experience to remember and one needs a good head! On the West Falkland, which regards itself as *imperium in imperio*, the managers take it in turn to entertain their colleagues at Christmas and every house in the settlement is crammed to the rafters—here, I suspect, is the nearest approach to a Dickensian Christmas but, alas, I had no opportunity of testifying for I held that the Governor's duty lay at Headquarters at this time.

Down in the Antarctic Dependencies the Administration maintains a chain of weather and scientific research stations which runs from South Georgia through Signy Island in the South Orkneys, Admiralty Bay and Deception Island in the South Shetlands, to Hope Bay at the extreme tip of Graham Land and so south to Port Lockroy and the Argentine Islands to the west of it. These lonely little outposts, sealed off by ice for the greater part of the year, have but a handful of men at each who are on duty day and night, holidays included; observations to be of value must be recorded regularly, but the spirit of Christmas will carry its cheerful message even here and the day will be kept as it should be even if the pudding comes out of a tin and roast seal or, perhaps, penguin takes the place

of turkey; with tinned ham and dehydrated vegetables as trimming. The cook of the week (each takes his turn) will spare no pains to provide something memorable and the Administration sees to it that there is an appropriate bottle for such celebrations. Time and ingenuity will be found to decorate their spartan living-quarters and to contrive presents for each other and there will be messages from home under special arrangements which have been made for this. Hope Bay is a sledging base and it is almost certain that half-a-dozen men will be in the field, camped out on the snow in two-man tents with their faithful huskies tethered close by; they too will keep Christmas as best they may.

And so when Christmas Day comes round again, my thoughts will fly back to my friends and colleagues in the Falklands, to the Bounds and the Bonners, the Bennetts and the Biggses, the Luxtons and Limosas, the McLeods and the McArthys, the Smiths, the Joneses and the Robertsons and a hundred more; and further south to the lads on the Antarctic Bases and the officers and crew of the good ship *John Biscoe* which serves them so well. Good luck to you all and a Happy Christmas!